

THE
NATIONAL REVIEW.



No. VI.

OCTOBER 1856.



London :

Chapman and Hall, 193 Piccadilly.

AGENTS :—Dublin : M'Glaſhan and Gill. Edinburgh : J. Menzies.
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ART. I.—THE GOWRIE CONSPIRACY.

The History of the Kirk of Scotland. By Mr. David Calderwood, sometime Minister of Crailing. Edited from the original Ms. in the British Museum. By the Rev. R. Thompson. Printed for the Wodrow Society. Edinburgh, 1845.

Gowrie; or, the King's Plot. By G. P. R. James. London: Sims and M'Intyre.

IN the months of August and September, in the year 1600, a controversy was going forward in Edinburgh of a very singular description. James VI., king of Scotland and king-expectant of England, had declared himself to have been exposed to a frightful danger, from which he had been delivered by a series of miracles. There was no apparent ambiguity in the circumstances; and in the main features of the story no deficiency of evidence. The hand of a ruffian had been on the king's throat; the point of a dagger at his breast. In facts so palpable as these he could not easily be mistaken; and while he published in the form of a proclamation an elaborate narrative of the attack upon him, he was anxious that his subjects should at once be made aware of the misfortune which they had so narrowly escaped, and should unite with him in an expression of gratitude to the Power which had interfered so signally in his behalf. The ministers of the church in Edinburgh were therefore invited to assist in this proper and natural proceeding; and on so remarkable an occasion objection could not have been easily anticipated. The duty which was laid before them was obvious, and ought to have been welcome; to hesitate was almost to declare themselves accomplices in the treason.

The ministers, on their part, had no thought of disloyalty; and yet such was their singular opinion of the king's character,

that the course which seemed so plain was full of difficulty. They did not wish to affront James; but still they hesitated. The injunctions of the council were delivered to them; instead of obeying these injunctions, they held a meeting to discuss the conduct which they were to pursue.

At length, after a debate, they repaired with their reply to the lords; and in spite of the direct and elaborate narrative which had been laid before them, they declared "that they were not certain of the treason, and therefore could make no mention of it." They would say in general, "that the king had been delivered from a great danger;" further than this they could not and would not commit themselves. James's own letters were produced. If the contents of them were more than naked lies, the conspiracy seemed as certain as evidence could make it; the council inquired if they would consent at least to read these letters. The ungracious divines replied that they could not read the king's letters to their congregations when they doubted the truth of them. It were better, and safer, to introduce a qualifying clause, and say, "if the report be true." Perhaps no anointed sovereign, heathen or Christian, was ever placed by his subjects in so uncomplimentary a situation. The lords of the council threatened; but threats were never efficacious with Scotch clergy. James himself hurried back to Edinburgh to reason them out of their incredulity; but his words were as powerless as his writings. They would offer no thanksgivings for an escape from a conspiracy unless they were assured that there had been a conspiracy from which to escape; in other words, unless they could satisfy themselves that the king was not lying to them. "Conviction," they said, "was the gift of God;" and "it had not pleased God," in the present instance, that they should be convinced.

We propose, with the assistance of the Calderwood papers, which contain all the known particulars, to examine the occasion of this embarrassing collision,—the famous so-called plot of the Earl of Gowrie and his brother to imprison or destroy the king. The ministers, it will be seen, were not wholly wrong; and yet James hardly deserved the position in which they placed him. If we could forget the fearful features of the story, the quarrel, which lingered for years, would form one of the most grotesque episodes in the history of these islands. At all events, both in itself and in its consequences, it is curiously illustrative of the condition of Scotland in the last years in which that country existed as a separate kingdom.

To enable our readers to understand the circumstances (or to understand them at least as far as they are ever likely to be understood), we must refresh their recollection with a few words

of preamble. Most people have read some history of North Britain in the sixteenth century : we believe, however, that they never met with any history more difficult to remember, because it is a mere record of anarchy ;—a string of incidents linked together in order of time, but with no organic connection.

The sixty years which followed the death of James V. may be described briefly as a period in which every conceivable element of disorder combined to make government impossible. Minorities, civil wars, wars of religion, treasons, villanies, depositions, had followed one upon another with scarcely an interval ; and the sixth James, who was in all likelihood conceived in crime, whose cradle was in the midst of murder, and whose earliest recollections must have been thronged with images of terror, grew to manhood the victim of a series of revolutions, in which the seizure of his own person was the unvarying preliminary movement. When we turn the pages of the annals of that time, we wonder that any good could have befallen at last a nation among whom such things were possible ; we wonder, at least, till we remember the Reformation, which alone formed the late and nobler type of the Scottish people. There was, however, this difference between the Reformation in Scotland and in England, that here it was the work of the government,—there it established itself in spite of the government ; and the attitude of mutual opposition outlived its proper causes. The original discord was never properly appeased ; and Protestantism, while it purified and ennobled the masses of the population, was unable to extend its renovating influence among the court and the aristocracy. The Protestant faith, in its proper spirit and sense, except for the few years which followed the expulsion of Mary, was regarded by the ruling classes with jealousy and dread ; and far from being able to lend tone and strength to authority, its chief business, and unfortunately at last its chief pleasure, was to tie the hands of a treacherous nobility, which was ever on the watch for its destruction.

Thus even the Reformers were driven to increase the social disorder by weakening the executive authority ; and for the repression of the normal forms of human wickedness there was no power any where. Every petty lord or chieftain was a king in his own eyes and in the eyes of his vassals. They lived each as they pleased, doing good or doing evil as their disposition prompted them ; and faction, treason, and revenge, tore the heart of the country. The sword was the only ruler. Enormous crimes were followed by enormous retaliations ; and the spasmodic efforts of justice by fresh villanies. Beton and David Rizzio were despatched by Lynch-law when their existence had become intolerable. Darnley, in his turn, died for Rizzio ; and

Beton's executioners slept all in bloody graves; while the few who were alive to the shame of Scotland, and struggled for order and justice,—men like the Regent Murray, Lennox, Morton, and Ruthven,—paid for their perilous heroism by assassination or on the scaffold.

And these larger tragedies were but the symbols of the ferocity by which the whole lives of men were saturated. Scott's great scene in the dungeon at Torquilstone was borrowed from the literal history of those frightful years: a wretched churchman was roasted on the bars of his prison fire-place by the Earl of Cassilis, till he signed away his lands. Lady Forbes and all her household were burnt alive by the Gordons in the flames of their own castle. Every town and hamlet, every grange and tower, had its separate tale of horror; and the story of Scotland until James VI. came to man's estate might be written in blood. In the frightful dissolution of social order, even justice could be executed only by formal crime; and, bred in the midst of these convulsions, a king in name, but powerless as a cockboat in a hurricane, the boy grew up the nucleus of every conspiracy, the plaything of a ferocious nobility. Statesmen on whom he could lean, dignified by established authority and length of years, there were none for him. The conception of statesmen, as experience had brought them in contact with himself, was of hard fierce men, alternately cruel tyrants and the victims of rivals like themselves. The guardian of one day passing to the scaffold on the next was the familiar issue of each oscillation of fortune.

This was not a happy training for any man, still less for a man compounded of materials such as those out of which nature had framed James Stuart. In a happier sphere, he might have grown up an innocent and not perhaps a wholly useless person. That, educated as he was, he became nothing worse than England and Scotland knew him to be, may be fairly reckoned to his credit. He could not have been great—the dwarf cannot be cultivated into the giant, or the mule into the war-horse—but his constitution was harmless, and could have been turned to good of a kind; with good fortune he might have made a useful Cathedral-dean or University-professor.

Circumstances, however, were not so kind to him. At the close of the civil wars of 1570-73, when the Reformers were for a time absolute, he was committed—being then six years old—to the care of Buchanan. The choice was not a wise one. Buchanan was an excellent scholar, he had large knowledge of books, and skill in book instruction; but, although his course in public life had been upright and just, he was a passionate polemic. A book in which he had exposed the queen's complicity in her husband's murder was notorious through the world; and the public accuser

of the mother was ill selected as the guardian of the child. Nor had the prince either friend or relation who could lend to his life any intervals of cheerfulness. His father and his uncle were murdered; Mary was a prisoner in England; and while the Protestants were in power, her name was only mentioned in his hearing coupled with execrations. Affection, in the human sense of the word, there was no human heart to feel for James, or to warm into life any answering emotion in himself: his heart, if he was born with one, soon became dry as the dust.

While Buchanan, again, taught him books and grammar, he had not found it necessary to teach him the use of an authority of which the Protestants intended to leave him but the name. The supremacy in matters temporal of the spiritual power over the secular was held as absolutely by the General Assembly as by Gregory VII.; and James, as a matter of course, being left to form his own notions, arrived at a conclusion exactly the opposite. Hence, as much by their fault as by his own, he grew up in a false relation with the ministers of the Kirk; and when he came to manhood, and was no longer an absolute cipher, we can scarcely wonder that they agreed worse and worse. Of governing Scotland, in the real sense of the word, he was altogether incapable. His occupation soon resolved itself into a foolish and undignified struggle with the Assembly. The ministers did not choose to remember that he was no longer a child. They lectured him in private; they preached at him in their pulpits; the king's manner, the king's actions, the king's words, were the topics of favourite disquisition with which, week after week, the Edinburgh congregations were entertained. James, on the other hand, very naturally hating them, intrigued against their liberties; and in prosecuting his quarrel, made himself as ridiculous and mischievous as themselves. While the country was being wrecked for want of government, the king of it was busying himself in ecclesiastical polemics. As the ministers would erect a counterfeit of the papal theory, so James would have his counterfeit of the opposing theory. He would be the Henry VIII. of Scotland, head of the Kirk, the ass in the lion's skin, the supreme authority in all causes, spiritual and civil, in his dominions.

We might smile at the grotesqueness of the dispute, were it not for the frightful consequences. It is not with impunity, however, that men who are in high place in this world can indulge in these unseemly triflings; and while the king and the clergy were bickering idly for pre-eminence, the crimes, black and horrible,—for the repression of which king and clergy, if they had known it, alike existed,—grew like the weeds in a neglected garden. A few witches and warlocks here and there were “wirried and burnt;” but there was the limit of the executive authority. The retainers

of the noble houses fought in Edinburgh streets before James's eyes; he looked on in helpless impotence, for what was he to stay them? Twice after he had come to man's estate he was attacked in his own palace to be abducted like a girl. And men whom he denounced as traitors appeared carelessly in their places at the council-board. If he complained, his answer was a smile of insolence.

The state to which the nation was reduced may be seen from the following extracts, taken almost at random from Calderwood:

"James Gray, brother of the master of Gray, ravished a gentlewoman, apparent heir to her father John Carnegie; but was rendered again to her father. She was again ravished by the said James out of Robert Gowsser's house in Edinburgh, where she and her father remained for the time; she was hauled down a close to the North Loch, and conveyed over in a boat. They set her on a man's saddle and conveyed her away, her hair hanging about her face. The Lord Hume kept the High Street with armed men till the fact was accomplished. Upon Monday, the 11th of June (1593), the provost, enterprising with some bailiffs between ten and eleven at night to apprehend James Henderson who had been at the ravishing, was repulsed. A debosched minister, named Bishop, took the provost by the throat, after he had charged Henderson to ward. The Laird of Hatton withstood that any man should have him—yea, they shot at the provost. The following day the provost went to the king and complained. The king desired to know if they could complain of any that was about him. In the mean time my Lord Hume, the chief author of the riot, was standing by. They answered nothing, because they expected for no justice."

Here, too, is an account of a piteous scene once witnessed in Edinburgh streets:

"In the same year, at afternoon, the 22nd of July, there came certain poor women out of the south country with fifteen bloody shirts, to complain to the king that their husbands, sons, and servants were cruelly murdered in their own houses by the Laird of Johnstone, themselves spoiled, and nothing left them. The poor women, seeing they could not get satisfaction, caused the bloody shirts to be carried by pioneers through the town of Edinburgh. The people were much moved, and cried out for a vengeance against the king and his council."

It was a wild miserable world; but how little the king could do to set it right might have been seen but two days later. We quote the next entry as it stands:

"On Tuesday, the 24th of July, the Earl Bothwell came to the palace of Holyrood House. At the back gate which openeth to the Lady Gowrie's house, as the Lady Athol was coming from the king and queen to her mother to take good night, he rapped rudely at the king's chamber-door, which was opened by the Earl of Athol. The king would have gone to the queen's chamber, but the door was locked; and the Duke (of Lennox), Athol, Ochiltree, Spinie, and Dunipace,

went between him and the door. The king, seeing no other refuge, asked what they meant? Came they to seek his life? Let them take it: they would not get his soul. Bothwell, sitting upon his knees, and M'Colville with him, said he sought not his life, but came to seek his highness's pardon for the raid of the Abbey, and the raid of Falkland—(attempts which he had previously made to seize or kill James)—offering to thole an assize for witchcraft, and for seeking the king's life; upon these and such other conditions they agreed, and his majesty pardoned him all bygans."

The royal robes must have been a bitter livery when the wearer of them was exposed to treatment such as this. James's peculiar gifts, his combined vanity and imbecility, may have protected him from the full consciousness of his humiliation; yet a school more unfitted for the cultivation of any kind of virtue, kingly or other, it is hard to conceive. It is to be remembered, too, that as no act of his own gave him the crown, so he was not at liberty to lay it aside. Unfitted by nature to govern an ordinary household, he was compelled, whether he would or no, to govern a kingdom—or to seem to govern it—at all events to maintain himself in his outward position. If he could have thrown himself, when he made the discovery of his weakness, on the people and on the Reformation—if he had sought help from Elizabeth and called to his counsels the few nobles who were inclined to the English alliance, his difficulties would in great measure have given way; and if he had escaped assassination, his course might have been easy. Such conduct, however, required a courage which had not been given to him, and qualities which no other Scotchman of his day possessed. The Reformers had taught him to hate them; he naturally looked for his friends among his mother's supporters; and all around him moving in crooked courses, it is little wonder that he followed with the stream, and took his mould from the influences which bore upon him.

When he was twenty-three years old he married; and at the birth of his first child there was some short-lived national enthusiasm. The agitations for a time subsided, and there was a respite from the worst disorders. The interval of repose, however, was soon over; and, whether justly or not, the queen herself furnished a fresh occasion for intrigues. It is necessary to speak of these things, because, to understand the conduct of any man, we must see as clearly as possible the circumstances which surrounded him; we cannot interpret conduct without a clue to the motives, actual or likely, which lead to it; and motives which, in certain conditions of things, are incomprehensible and impossible, in others become intelligible and natural. Anne of Denmark brought with her into Scotland the habits which were usual on the Continent among ladies of rank. She was fond of amusement, fond

of splendour and society; and she was transferred into a scene, where, in the eyes of the ministers,—the rugged guardians of morality,—a gay dress was the livery of sin, and a ball or a masque a service in Satan's temple. No public scandal has fastened on her memory; there is no admissible evidence that her conduct was ever really censurable. But the reformed clergy were haunted by the recollection of the luxurious and splendid wickedness of Mary; and the most innocent gaiety threatened a similar career. In every courtier on whom the queen smiled, they discovered a second Rizzio or Bothwell. The queen's conduct was discussed in the General Assembly, and resolutions were taken interfering with her household and her friends. Pressing their intrusion further, the divines even presumed to remonstrate, "as touching her company, her not repairing to the word and sacraments, her nightwalking and balling."* If their jealousy was occasioned by an earnest anxiety for the public good, it may be excused and even admired. It may be, however, that the Edinburgh ministers were not so disinterested; and that the reflections on the queen were but a part of the petty war between the king and themselves. Scandal, however, never found a public unwilling to listen to it. It is certain that whether their suspicions were just or unjust, the public expression of them soon produced the most painful effect. Even James himself, while deaf to the Kirk on subjects when it could have guided him wisely, opened his ears wide when it would have been well if they had remained closed. A shadow fell over Anne. Prince Henry, not long after his birth, was removed from her care. She was only allowed to see him in the presence of his keepers; and with James's consent, if not by his directions, she was herself the object of surveillance. Nor was this the worst. Slander is never contented to remain indefinite; and if the popular poetry of the time may be trusted, the name of more than one nobleman was mixed with hers, and one tragedy at least, if not a second, revenged her supposed unfaithfulness.

Readers of the Scotch ballads need hardly be reminded of the bonny Earl of Murray, whose fate is the subject of one of the most beautiful of them.

"Ye highlands and ye lawlands,
 Oh! quhair hae ye been?
 They hae slaine the Earle of Murray,
 And hae laid him on the green.
 Now wae be to thee, Huntley!
 And quhairfore did ye sae?
 I bade you bring him wi' you,
 But forbade you him to slay.

* Calderwood, vol. v. p. 469.

He was a braw gallant,
And he rid at the ring ;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
Oh ! he might hae been a king.

He was a braw gallant,
And he played at the glove ;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
Oh ! he was the queene's luvè."

The last line is no enigmatical interpretation of Murray's murder. The story has a wild and terrible grandeur about it ; and is too curious a parallel to the Gowrie mystery to be passed by without some notice. The "bonny earl" was nephew of the regent, whose estates he inherited as well as his name and popularity. Whether there was cause for the king's jealousy of him we can now only guess ; but as he was said to be the most beautiful person in Scotland, and James's bodily attractions were small, perhaps the consciousness of his defects made the husband credulous. At any rate he supposed himself to have been injured ; and, under pretence that Murray was a partisan of Bothwell, he directed Lord Huntley, the earl's hereditary enemy, to seize him.

Murray was staying with his mother, the Lady of Down, at the house of Dinny Bryssell, in Fife. The Gordons, with Huntley at their head, drew round the walls in the dead of a winter's night. They fired the outhouses, the granaries, and at last the doors, and they watched by the light of the flames to prevent the escape of their victim. Murray sprang out. He was a very active man, and contrived to evade or break their line. In another moment he would have been lost in the darkness. By his evil fortune, however, a spark had caught his dress ; it blazed up ; he was discovered, and was shot down as he ran. The Gordons having done their work, withdrew before daybreak. One of them, who was supposed to have been killed in the confusion, was left on the ground wounded. In the morning two litters were prepared. In one was placed the body of the earl ; in another, the wounded Gordon. The picture of Murray had been made roughly on canvas, as he lay scorched and bleeding upon the grass ; and the Lady of Down led the mourning procession into Edinburgh, bearing the painting like a banner in her hand. Two balls had been found in her son's wounds : one she sent in piteous protest to James ; the other, she said, "she reserved for herself, to be bestowed on him that hindereth justice." The effect of such a spectacle may be imagined. The people rose in fury, heaping execrations on James's head. He issued a hurried proclamation declaring his innocence, but without effect in allaying the tumult. The Gordon was put to death at the market-cross ; and in the first burst

of the storm it might have gone hard with the king himself, had he not escaped out of the town. He wrote afterwards to Huntley to say that "he had never been in such peril and danger of his life since he was born." Popular explosions, however, where created by a single event, are soon over; if their work can be done on the instant, it may be done well and efficiently; if the opportunity is lost, the force of the movement is exhausted. From beyond the walls of the city, James could temporise in safety. Huntley consented to a collusive imprisonment, and a public trial was promised; and the lords gained time to assemble in sufficient strength to shield the murderer, whose punishment would be too dangerous a precedent. In a month all was over and forgotten; and the Lady of Down, in passionate despair of justice, broke her heart and died for sorrow, leaving only with her last breath a mother's malediction to the king.

Something will now be understood of the condition of Scotland at the close of the sixteenth century. It was a condition in which no act of violence need appear surprising; in which there was no law, nor even any general conception of justice; where each separate person was the defender of his own rights and his own honour, and measured what was due to him only by the rule of his passions. King and subject were so far on a common level; for, if the king was injured, he had no remedy but private revenge. King might plot against subject, or subject against king; and deprived of the guidance of settled habits and settled convictions, men naturally neither violent nor vicious might lend themselves to actions which were both. In the discussions of historians on the tragedy which we are about to examine, much has been said on either side of the unlikelihood of the crime as a crime. But the unlikelihood amounts to nothing appreciable. James was not a bad man, but he lent himself to Murray's murder; and with the same provocation might have consented to the murder of Gowrie. Gowrie may have had all the virtues which the Protestants claimed for him; but the very virtues of the Ruthven family had shown themselves chiefly in acts which were formally treason.

We must clear our minds, then, of all preconceived probabilities, and form our conclusions merely upon the evidence. It is worth while to take some trouble with it; for James, if nothing better, was a king of England, and his doings, good or evil, will be discussed and written of while the history of England continues to be of interest. To proceed, then.

The Ruthvens of Perth had from the beginning been consistent supporters of the Scotch Reformation. The old earl, whose name is so familiar to students of Mary Stuart's history, was the first noble who recognised John Knox, and who dared to cross

the path of Mary of Guise. In the insurrection of 1558, which overthrew the old establishment, Ruthven was foremost; and afterwards, as the friend of Murray, he laboured like a loyal gentleman to keep his daughter out of the evil ways into which she was plunging. Mary's bad genius, however, was too strong for Ruthven's counsel. When he found that he could do nothing, he withdrew from the court, and left her to go her course to its proper ending. His health broke up in his retirement. He lived long enough, however, to bear a part in the punishment of Rizzio, rising from a sick bed to assist in the execution; and it was to him that Lord Bedford was indebted for the account contained in the warden's despatches, of the scene in the queen's room at Holyrood, which removes the last doubt that charity might have laboured to entertain of the nature of her connection with the favourite. Two months later, Ruthven died. He was succeeded in his title by his son; and the young lord, who inherited his father's character and policy, after Mary's exile, when the Protestant party was again in the ascendant, became also Earl of Gowrie.

This Gowrie, or Ruthven, was the hero of the famous *raid*; an achievement in its time of considerable moment,—another of those rough measures of justice which the sickness of the age made necessary. He was nearly connected with the crown, having married Dorothea Stuart, half-sister (it would seem) to Darnley,* and therefore aunt of the king. And when the unwise James had bestowed his affections on French Catholic favourites, who were occupying themselves in cutting off honest men's heads and debauching their neighbours' wives, Ruthven, using the privilege of an uncle, took possession of his nephew's person, and confined him for a while in better company. The earl did good service to his country: for himself, however, he found his natural reward. The authority of a strong just man threatened to put a period to anarchy; and the nobles combined to protect their liberties. Although hating one another, they could unite in a greater common hatred of any thing good. Another revolution soon followed. The raid was discovered to have been high treason; and, in 1584, Ruthven's head fell at Stirling.

It is due to James to say, that he was not himself responsible for this piece of wickedness; he was but a plaything in the hands of the fierce bad men who surrounded him, and was in age but a

* Dorothea Stuart was daughter of Lord Methuen, who married Margaret, queen-dowager of Scotland and sister of Henry VIII., after her divorce from her second husband, the Earl of Angus. But whether Dorothea was the child of this marriage is uncertain. The ease and frequency of divorces—another frightful evil of the social system of the time—renders the pedigrees of the great families extremely intricate.

boy at the time. He seems to have honestly regretted what he was unable to prevent; and, though he could have had no particular regard for his kinsman, as soon as he came of age and could consult his own feelings, he proved his sorrow by annulling the attainder of the family, and restoring to the countess and his cousin their rank and estates.

Nor did his good-will confine itself to an act of mere justice. The earl had left behind him six children at least—two daughters and four sons. The eldest girl was given in marriage to the Duke of Lennox, the first nobleman in Scotland. Beatrice, the next, was attached to the court, and was lady-in-waiting to the queen; a house was assigned to their mother, adjoining the palace at Holyrood; and Alexander, the second son, grew up in James's suite, and was his intimate companion. These things are of great importance, as showing the relation which existed between the Ruthvens and the king. It seems, at the outset at least, as if the only desire was to bury all painful recollections in kindness.

The young Earl Gowrie, about the year 1594, went abroad to be educated. He was for five years at the University of Padua; where, in compliment perhaps to his rank, he was nominated lord rector. It is, however, certain that, in mind and character, he was no ordinary person. At a time when many of the lords who sate in the estates at Edinburgh could scarcely write their names, Gowrie studied Greek and Hebrew; and, fatally for his reputation, he had mastered a few secrets of physical science, as it was then taught at Padua, which on his return brought him the name of a necromancer. In religion, like his father and grandfather, he seems to have been a Calvinist. At Geneva he became an intimate friend of Theodore Beza, who remembered him with peculiar affection; and his political sympathies being also those of his family, he inclined to England and the English alliance as the best support of his country. Abroad he courted the acquaintance of English noblemen; the house of Sir Henry Neville, Elizabeth's ambassador, was his home at Paris; and when the time came for his return to Scotland, he went through London on his way, where he was received with especial honour by the queen.

His reputation preceded him; and the appearance in public life of the chief of the Ruthven family was necessarily an event of great importance. During his absence, the French and Spanish faction had been supreme in James's council; the Protestants had become gradually weaker; and a concealed but active correspondence had been carried on between the king and the court of Rome. The parties, however, were nearly equally balanced; and the arrival of Gowrie, whose principles were so well

known, was anxiously expected with violently opposite feelings. The jealousy of James is said to have been excited by the treatment which he had received from Elizabeth. This circumstance is more probable in itself than attested by evidence. It is certain, however, that when he crossed the border, he was already feared and hated by a faction who had strong influence over James's mind; and, perhaps unhappily for him, the Protestants made his return the occasion of a popular demonstration. It was in February A.D. 1600 that Gowrie entered Edinburgh. "He raid up the calsey with a great company of his friends," the hero of the party with whom the king was in perpetual feud; and the old dread and panic at the Ruthven name which had slept for so many years woke again when James heard of it. With an unfeeling bitterness, which was bitterly remembered against him, he was heard to mutter, "There were more with his father when he was conveyed to the scaffold;" and he seems to have eyed Gowrie as Saul eyed David.

It soon appeared, too, that the earl was his father's son, and was a true Ruthven at heart. In March there was a convention of the estates; the king having occasion for money, some iniquitous taxing scheme was proposed; and Gowrie opened his political life with opposing the court, and opposing it successfully. The scheme failed: the king's purse remained empty; and his temper was not improved towards the cause. The young patriot had made himself obnoxious; and his probable fate was foreseen and foretold. While they were still in council, Sir David Murray pointed to him where he sat: "Yonder," said he, "is an unhappy man; they are but seeking occasion of his death, which now he has given."* There must have been some cause for so remarkable a prophecy beyond a single act of political opposition. The absence of facts, however, may not be supplied by guesses. We must confine ourselves to what we actually know.

But although Gowrie had openly joined the opposition, there was no open rupture with the court; and he continued through the spring on apparently friendly terms with the king. He was frequently at Holyrood. We hear of the king conversing freely with him on questions of science, and writing frequently to him when absent. Nor, again, on his part are there any symptoms of manœuvring, or any signs of a desire to interfere with the court, except in the discharge of his immediate duty in the council. In personal disposition he was reserved, retiring, and unambitious. At the beginning of the summer he settled in his house at Perth, of which the earls of Ruthven were hereditary provosts.

* Calderwood, vol. vi. This seems an ascertained fact.

We hear of him being active as a magistrate, and by and by as making preparation for his marriage. So far as we can see with our meagre knowledge, nothing could have been further from his thoughts than conspiracy, as nothing could have been more useless. At no time in James's reign would a conspiracy against him have been less likely to succeed; or, if successful, have promised so little to the cause which Gowrie most regarded.

Such, then, being the general position of the Ruthven toward the king, we pass on to the eventful Tuesday the 5th of August, in this same year 1600; and James, who from the commencement of the story is the chief or rather the only witness, shall tell it his own way.

At the end of July the court had removed to Falkland for the hunting season. The sportsmen in those days were early in the field; and James was mounting his horse between six and seven in the morning, when Alexander Ruthven, dusty from a hurried journey, came suddenly up to him and begged a private audience. The king went aside with him; and Ruthven, with a mysterious manner, declared that on the preceding evening he had been walking near Perth, when he had met a suspicious-looking stranger wandering with no apparent purpose about the fields. He questioned him, he said, as to who and what he was; and finding his answers unsatisfactory, and observing that he was carrying something concealed in his dress, threw back the folds of the man's cloak, and found under his arm "a great wide pot all full of coined gold in great pieces." No account could be given of the gold further than that the stranger said he was looking for a place where he could bury it. Ruthven therefore at once arrested him, took him into the town, locked him carefully up in "a darned outhouse" with his treasure, and without informing his brother or any other person of the capture, had ridden off upon the spot to inform his majesty.

This, it is to be remembered, is the account which was given afterwards by the king; we have no means of checking it; and the only ascertained fact is that Ruthven appeared in the courtyard at Falkland. No stranger had been really found, and no treasure; and the rest of his story either was a lie on the part of Ruthven, or else was invented by the king to conceal something which he did not care to expose. Reserving our opinion for the present, we proceed. James said that he thought the matter "very strange." It occurred to him that the stranger might be a Jesuit, and that the gold might be some private supply sent from Spain to feed a popish conspiracy. Large sums of money had before found their way into the realm from that quarter in a strange manner, and the suspicion was not an unnatural one. It is remarkable only that James was himself at that very mo-

ment engaged in a correspondence with the Pope; and that at no other time, at any rate, had he discovered particular zeal in detecting Jesuits, while his story, as it appeared in English,* was addressed to his Protestant subjects to appease their suspicious irritation. Whatever he thought, however, or professed to have thought, he thanked Ruthven, as he said, for his zeal, and proposed that he should send a warrant to the provost of Perth (the Earl of Gowrie) to examine the man and take charge of the money; when a report was returned, he said, he would consider further. To this Ruthven made strong objection. He said, that if his brother had possession of the money, his majesty would receive but a bad account of it; and he pressed the king to return with him to Perth, and see the stranger himself. The distance was something under twenty miles; they could be on the spot in two hours at the furthest. "His brother and all the town would be at sermon;" and "his majesty might take what secret order he pleased before they came out of church;" while, if they delayed too long, *the man might cry out*; some one would hear him, and the money would be lost. The king was at a loss what to do. His coffers, as we have seen, were not well supplied, partly through Gowrie's means; and "a pot of gold" had a tempting sound. On the other hand, the story was a wild one; and for a moment he thought that Ruthven might be out of his mind. Meanwhile the dogs had gone forward; the horns were blowing; the stag was found; and he would see the hunt out at any rate. He galloped off, still thinking of what he had heard; and shortly after he sent back a page to desire Ruthven to follow him, with a message, that when the sport was over, he would do as he had desired.

The hunt lasted long, Mr. Alexander being "much impatient" the while, and at every pause or check riding up and "rounding in the king's ear that he should make haste." At length, about eleven o'clock, the stag was killed. James turned

* A Latin version was published, in which, it was observed, the passage alluding to the Jesuits was omitted,—an unfortunate circumstance, which brought the king into still deeper discredit. It might be, as the acute ministers at Edinburgh observed, "that the Papists" would then have "said it was a lee." And if Catholics and Protestants united in their incredulity, it might have been awkward. Further suspicion falls on James from an attempt which he made to fasten on the Ruthvens a charge of Romanising. Patrick Galloway, the king's preacher, was instructed to say of Gowrie, that "without the country he haunted with the Papists, yea, with the Pope himself: with whom he had not conference only, but farther has made covenants and bands with him, as appears very well; for since his home-coming he has travelled most earnestly with the king; and his majesty has received from him the hardest assault that ever he did to revolt from religion,—at least in inward sincerity, to entertain purpose with the Pope." *Calderwood*, vi. 52. So transparent a slander obtained the credit which it deserved; and where so large a lie was thought necessary, it was felt the more confidently that there was something ugly behind it.

to his train, telling them he was going to Perth to speak to the Earl of Gowrie, and that he would return before the evening. He gave no directions for any one to accompany him; and leaving the courtiers to follow or not as they pleased, he started with Ruthven. Lord Mar, the Duke of Lennox, Sir Thomas Erskine, and a few other noblemen whose grooms were in the field with fresh horses, mounted with the best speed they could make and rode after. The rest, being unprovided, were obliged to return to Falkland.* It seems that Ruthven hoped to have taken the king with him alone. When Mar and the others came up, he urged that they should go back, and "so vehemently" that the king began to suspect mischief; he rode aside with Lennox, and told him the story; and although he still resolved to go forward, he desired Lennox "not to fail to accompany him to the house where the alleged fellow and treasure was."† They then rode rapidly on; James's mind, he said, misgiving him, yet unable to come to any sure conclusion. One moment he doubted Ruthven's loyalty, and the next he "was ashamed of" his doubt; and so, "between trust and distrust," he found himself two miles from Perth.

Here a messenger was pushed forward to announce that the king was coming, and to prepare the earl for his royal visitor. It was now one o'clock. Lord Gowrie, on the messenger's arrival, was sitting alone at dinner; and if he was not taken by surprise, he acted his part to perfection. He rose in haste from the table, and calling his people out of the hall (there were about eighty of them altogether), he hurried down to meet the king on the meadow beyond the gates. He escorted him to his house, making apologies for the indifferent entertainment which on the moment he should be able to offer. Dinner, however, should be ready as soon as possible; and he hoped to be forgiven if any thing was deficient, on the ground of want of preparation. They dismounted; and as there was some delay before dinner appeared, the king whispered to Alexander Ruthven that now was the time to inspect the stranger and his treasure. Ruthven, who had before been so anxious that time should not be lost, replied, he said, to the king's surprise, that "there was no hurry," "his majesty might dine at leisure," "praying his majesty to leave him, and

* This is important; and being an ascertained fact, and not resting on James's authority, it disposes conclusively of the suspicion of intended foul play on the part of the court against the Ruthvens. If there had been any prearranged scheme to turn a hunting-party into a body of conspirators, the precaution would have been surely taken to furnish a sufficient number of the king's train with fresh horses. Of the noblemen who actually accompanied him, two at least were near connections of the Ruthven family: Lord Mar was the earl's godfather, and the Duke of Lennox was his brother-in-law.

† This is important, as will be presently seen.

not to be seen to round with him before his brother, who, having missed him that morning, might suspect what the matter could mean.* The earl meanwhile was anxious and disturbed. There was a visible embarrassment in his manner; but it was no more than might be explained by the sudden visitation, which, especially if there had been any coldness between himself and the king, may have been easily unwelcome.†

An hour passed away. At length dinner was ready. A separate cover was placed for the king in the earl's sitting-room. The rest of the party were taken to the great table in the hall. According to the etiquette of the time, the host ought to have remained with the latter to entertain them. It was observed that he left them to themselves, and returned, after seeing them seated, to wait upon the king. He hung about the room in a constrained uneasy manner; and at length James, who was anxious to be left to himself, that he might set out on his adventure with young Ruthven, rallied him on his ignorance of Scotch manners, and, "in a merry, homely manner," dismissed him to his company.

Gowrie went. According to James's story, although the two brothers had been alone with him in a private room, nothing had passed of an unusual kind. There had been no dispute, no irritating questions. If they had chosen to seize him, he was then at their mercy. His train was separated from him, and at most did not amount to more than fourteen persons; Gowrie's own household servants would have sufficed to arrest the whole of them, unsuspecting and unarmed. However, as we said, the earl left the apartment; James and Ruthven rose immediately; and we must now observe particularly the king's account. The difficulty of the story lies in the mysterious suddenness with which the catastrophe broke.

Ruthven, he said, first led him across the bottom of the hall where his party were at dinner. He thus gave him an opportunity of directing any of the noblemen to accompany him, if he had desired to do so; and it is evident that James did nothing of the kind. He had previously said that the Duke of Lennox should go with him; and as Lennox must have seen him cross the hall, some intimation must have been given that his presence would not be required. They then passed up a staircase, at the head of which was a double door; Ruthven locked it behind them, and thence they went on through a suite of apartments, into a small room six feet in diameter, which was called "the study." Being so small, and there being another door in the opposite side, this must have been a sort of passage-room. Possibly, how-

* King's declaration. Calderwood, vi. 35.

† "A cold welcome—a very cold welcome." Calderwood.

ever, it was used by Gowrie for scientific or other similar purposes. Here, as they came in, James said that he saw before him, not a bound man, but a freeman with a very abashed countenance, and a dagger at his girdle. He was stammering out an inquiry whether this was the stranger whom they had come to see, when Ruthven for answer locked the door by which they had entered; and then, with an instant change in his manner, thrust on his bonnet, and snatching the dagger from the man's belt, he held the point of it at the king's breast, "bidding him remember his father's murder, and swearing that if he cried out he should die."

James is said to have been a coward, although on trying occasions he exhibited rather helplessness than fear, and his hard riding seems incompatible with a positive absence of courage. However this may be, if he is to be trusted, he did not on the present occasion lose his presence of mind; he collected himself as well as the suddenness of the attack would allow him. He was unarmed, and had no defence but his eloquence, which, however, he summoned to his help. He poured out an excellent discourse on the impropriety of making away with kings; he reminded Ruthven (so he assured his Protestant subjects) of the lessons which he had received from that worthy man Mr. Robert Rollock, the minister at Edinburgh, and of the kindnesses he had himself shown the Gowrie family. He declared justly that he was a boy at the time of the late earl's death, and could not be held responsible for it; and finally he promised, on the word of a prince, that if Ruthven would spare his life, he would never mention what had passed to any human being.

The strange man meanwhile never had offered to move, but "stood trembling and shaking more like a condemned man than the executioner of such an enterprise." He had cried out, nevertheless, when Ruthven first caught the dagger, "with trembling attestations, exclaiming against the meddling with his majesty;" and Ruthven, between the helplessness of his follower and the power of the king's oratory, appeared for the moment to be moved. He took off his bonnet, and in a more respectful tone said that the king had nothing to fear. If he would be quiet and make no noise, his life should be safe. He would go himself and fetch his brother the earl. With these words he left the room; first, however, exacting an oath that the king should remain silent, and that he should not open the window which looked into the street; and at the same time telling the man that he left his majesty in his hands, and that he should be responsible for his prisoner with his life.

The king was then alone with his strange companion, to whom he appealed for an explanation of the scene. What was intended

with him, he asked. Did the Earl of Gowrie mean to kill him? The man, with "a trembling and astonished voice," declared that he knew as little as his majesty. As God should judge him, he was ignorant of any conspiracy; and that he had been locked in the room, he knew not for what cause, but a few minutes before his majesty entered.

James bade him open the window, having, as he said, given his word that he would not open it himself,—a piece of helpless sophistry, introduced, we may suppose, into the narrative like the story of the Jesuit, to please the precisians of the Kirk. It will be seen that there are many ascertainable inaccuracies throughout the whole account of the scene in the closet. Presently there were steps again upon the stairs, the door was thrown open, and Ruthven came passionately back, with a pair of garters in his hand, declaring there was no remedy, and that the king must die. He offered to twist the garters about James's hands. James cried out that he would not be bound; if he was to die, he would die a free man, and began to struggle. Ruthven tried to draw his sword.* The king caught him by the throat with one hand, and caught the sheath of the sword in the other. They were close to the window, and while Ruthven tried to silence him by thrusting his fingers into his mouth, he was able to stutter loud enough to make himself heard in the street.

Such are the facts as James related them. We must now return for a few moments to the hall. It would throw considerable light upon the greatest difficulties of the case, if we knew how long an interval elapsed between the time when the king went up the stairs with Ruthven till the cry at the window. He could not have been many minutes in the study; and we should desire to know whether any period remains unaccounted for, when something else, which James did not care to acknowledge, may have taken place in the gallery. The king's train, at all events, had finished their dinner, and were rising from the table, when a servant came hastily in, and said that the king had mounted his horse, and had ridden off across the meadow. They all hurried out, Gowrie being himself with them. The hall-door led into a quadrangle, from which a gate opened into the street. The party hastened to the porter's lodge, where they were told that it was a mistake. The king was still in the house; or if he had left it, it was not through the gate. Gowrie said that he believed the porter "leed." He would see instantly, however, what was the truth, and disappeared up a staircase. In a few moments he returned saying that the king had gone out by a postern, and that they must mount at once and overtake him. They passed

* It was found afterwards *rusted into the scabbard* so tightly that two men could not draw it.

out into the street, calling loudly for their horses. At that moment the window above their heads was flung open; a voice was heard crying to the Earl of Mar for help, and looking up they saw Ruthven and the king in the act of struggling.

Sir Thomas Erskine, who was standing next to the Earl of Gowrie, caught him by the gorget, exclaiming, "Thou art the traitor!" and flung him on the ground. One of the Ruthvens, in return, felled Erskine with "a buffet;" and all the party then scattered in search of some means of access to the room where the king was crying. Lord Mar and the Duke of Lennox tried the stairs by which he had gone up from the hall, but they were stopped by the locked doors, and were obliged to wait for axes and hammers before they could force their way. Sir John Ramsay, "a page," by accident, discovered the back staircase which formed the other approach. It was open; and he ran up, followed, at a short interval, by Sir Thomas Erskine and Sir Hugh Herries. Ramsay, when he came upon the scene, found the king, who was a weaker and smaller man than Ruthven, just on the point of winning the victory for himself. He had got his assailant's head under his arm, and was in the act of thrusting him out of the door. In such a situation it would have been easy to secure Ruthven, unarmed as he was, for his sword was still in the scabbard, and he had no other weapon. Perhaps, however, this would have required greater coolness than could fairly have been looked for. The king cried to the page to strike him under the doublet, and kept his hold till Ramsay had stabbed him twice. They then together thrust the wounded man down the steps, where he was found immediately after by Erskine and Herries. They at least might have taken him prisoner without difficulty; but either they forgot it, or they remembered that dead men tell no tales. They despatched him with their swords; and the only words which he was heard to utter were, "*Alas, I had not the wit of it!*"*

By this time Gowrie himself had reached the staircase; he had gone, it would seem, for arms, and now came up with a sword in each hand, attended by one companion; two others remaining below.† He must have passed his brother's body on the steps; but he ran on, and as he appeared, the king was thrust back into the room and the door was shut. If Gowrie had meditated foul play, he was a blundering traitor. Erskine said to him, "You have killed the king our master; and will you also

* Spotswood, who heard the story two days after from the minister at Perth, says that the words were, "I take God to witness I was not to blame."

† Spotswood, Calderwood. James said that seven or eight came up with the earl; but they were like Falstaff's men in buckram. His terror multiplied the number. This is the most audacious falsehood which we can detect in his story.

take our lives?" "The king killed!" Gowrie could only exclaim. The points of his swords were dropped to the ground; he stood overwhelmed as it seemed with horror; and while in this position, Ramsay stole behind him, and stabbed him through the back.*

Gowrie fell, and died without a word. Almost at the same instant Mar and the Duke of Lennox came in on the other side, having broken their way through the door at the head of the staircase. All was over before they arrived; and James, as they joined him, with an earnestness which it is impossible to believe wholly counterfeited, fell on his knees in the midst of the group to offer thanks for his escape. "His majesty," they said, "out of his own mouth did then thank God of that miraculous deliverance and victory; assuring himself that God had preserved him out of so desperate a peril for the perfecting of some greater work behind, and for the procuring by him the weale of his people."

He was still, nevertheless, in great danger. His little party was surrounded by the exasperated household, who were swarming in the quadrangle. Gowrie had disappeared; nothing certain was known of his fate; and the news of the confusion spread like wildfire into the town, where he was warmly beloved. The mob, with the retainers of Ruthven, beset the doors, crying, that they would have the earl, or the king's green coats should pay for it; and words were heard ringing up the staircase which must have made James quake from rage and terror. "Come down," cried Ruthven of Foregun; "come down, thou son of Signor Davie; thou hast slain an honest man than thyself." At length the bailiffs, with the town-watch, appeared on the scene, and restored some kind of order. They made their way through the crowd, and after a parley were admitted into the room, where the king's story was told to them. The presence of Lennox and Mar gave a weight to his words which his own unkingly carriage would less easily have obtained. Satisfied at least, if not of the earl's guilt, yet of the obvious improbability that James, with a small unarmed train, could have come to Perth with the deliberate intention of committing a crime, they undertook to pacify the people and secure his escape. There was nothing else to be done. If the earl's people had killed the whole party before they arrived, perhaps no great regret would have been felt for them; but it was obviously impossible for the magistrates of a provincial town to consent to the arrest of their sovereign. They descended into the quadrangle, and persuaded

* Spotswood. The archbishop's evidence is unexceptionable on this point, for he takes James's side. And yet, in the proclamation, the court dared to pretend that there had been a desperate battle, and that the king's party were all wounded.

the crowd to disperse; and late in the evening the king made his way out of the place, and returned to Falkland.

The mysterious tragedy was concluded, whatever was the true cause of it. The two Ruthvens were dead, who alone possessed the clue to the mystery; and James was the only living person who could tell whether any secret lay behind which he had not revealed, or whether he had related faithfully what had befallen himself. Doubtless he would have been glad to leave the matter where it lay, and stir no further in it. But this was impossible. For the second time within a few years a popular nobleman had been brought to a violent end by the king's fault or misfortune; and the position and character of the Earl of Gowrie made a public explanation indispensable. Some version of what had taken place must be laid before the nation which they could accept, or at least profess to accept; or the crown which James wore, and still more the crown which he hoped to wear, might be in peril.

The next morning, therefore, before or after the day's hunting (for it is noticeable that, notwithstanding his supposed miraculous deliverance, for which Scotland was to go upon its knees, his amusements went on as usual),* an official narrative was drawn up, when the story was told as it has been here related, and submitted to the ministers at Edinburgh. The ignominious reception of it we already know, and it is not easy to blame the general unbelief. Truthfulness, as was well known, was not a virtue for which James was distinguished; and looked at merely in itself, irrespective of other evidence, the account seemed utterly wild, incoherent, and incredible. The fact of the death of the Ruthvens seemed to be the only fact which was certain. The best evidence in favour of the rest was, that if James had been driven into invention, he would have put together something more plausible. The ministers may have been inclined to judge him hardly, but even the most moderate persons felt uncertain; and the more the story was scrutinised, the more serious appeared its flaws. The variations in the Latin and English versions, the attempts to fasten upon the Protestant Gowrie a charge of secret dealing with the Pope, were uselessly impudent; and when it became known that, instead of the seven or eight ruffians who were said to have assisted the earl in his attack on the king, he had been attended by but one man, and had been stabbed unresistingly behind his back, so grave a falsehood compelled the worst suspicions.

Calderwood has preserved the expressions of feeling which were generally current; and the objections, it must be allowed, seem fatal to James's credit.

* Calderwood, vi. p. 49.

Gowrie was a nobleman of stainless character. How was it to be supposed, men asked, that he would have inveigled the king to his house with an intention of killing or imprisoning him, when he had nothing to gain by his crime, and he would be held instantly and inevitably accountable?

The story of the pot of gold was strange and improbable. It was childish to believe that a sane man would have tempted the king with such a bait, or that James could have been caught by it.

Young Ruthven had urged as a reason for haste that his prisoner might cry out and make a noise. Surely any common person would have thought that he might have cried out already. He had been taken the evening before: and Ruthven had been all night and the morning after absent. Unless some better security had been taken for his keeping, it was a fool's errand to ride twenty miles the middle of the next day in the hope of finding him safe.

The king said he thought Ruthven might perhaps be mad, or might be meditating treason. If he had suspicions of this kind, why did he venture to go alone with him into the gallery without calling Lennox, or at least some servant, to attend him, as he passed through the hall?

Still more, how could Ruthven have calculated beforehand on such an extent of foolishness? And James, in his explanation, embarrassed this portion of his case still more deeply. When the accusations were retorted on himself, when he, and not the Earl of Gowrie, was called the chief conspirator, he declared that he had no need to have hazarded his person in that way in order to punish the Ruthvens. "He had cause enough to have taken their lives, if he had pleased."* If the two brothers were already so deep in treason as to have forfeited their lives, and James knew it, who could believe that he would have been tempted by a report of a pot of gold to trust himself in their power?

The strange helpless man in the study too, who and what was he? Why was he not produced? He had been placed there, it seemed, with no word of instruction what he was to do, or what was expected of him. If an accomplice had been wanted for the murder, would not some one have been selected who had been prepared for his work beforehand? If Ruthven was to have done the deed himself, would he have placed a witness on the very spot where it was to be perpetrated? The supposition was absurd.

Ruthven was unarmed. His sword was at his belt, but it could not be drawn for rust. Was this like a preparation for assassination?

* Calderwood, vi. p. 85.

And again: "it was thought a foolish thing in Mr. Alexander, and unlikely, to hold a dagger to the king's breast, and then to stand upon parley."

How, after his first menace, could Mr. Alexander have gone out, leaving the king with a man who, it was clear by that time, would give no help,—taking a promise from the king that he would not open the window, or call out?

When he came back again, and said that he must kill him, would he have waited to tie his hands with a garter? A charge with so many improbabilities would have been laughed out of any court of justice in the kingdom.

Why, it was asked, was Alexander Ruthven killed? They had closed the lips which alone could confute the king's story; and with his last breath he had declared his innocence.

The cry was, therefore, for the only other witness,—the man in the study. If any such man had existed at all (which was generally doubted), he could be found somewhere. Let him be brought forward. The king could give no description of him, except that he was "a black grim man." He had not asked him his name. The fellow had slipped away, it was said, when Sir John Ramsay came up the stairs; and yet Erskine and Herries, who were immediately behind, had seen nothing of him. He had disappeared like a wraith,—a creation of James's terror, or perhaps invention.

Public opinion had pronounced so decidedly against the court that they found it essential somehow to produce this man,—the real man, if possible; if not possible, then some one who could pass for the real man, for produced he must be. He was indispensable to their case. They mismanaged the matter miserably; for although, as we believe, there was a man, and he was at last discovered, in their eagerness or their carelessness they had blundered first on so many counterfeits that the truth became only a fresh falsehood. First one man was produced, and then another; but the evidence in each case broke down. After two failures, it was asserted positively that the guilty person was a certain Harry Younger, a servant of the earl. This again was a mistake; but the suspicion cost the poor man his life. On the day in question Younger had been at Dundee, and not at Perth at all; and he was on his way to the court to protest his innocence when he was met by a party of troopers. They chased him, and he tried to hide himself among some cornsheaves; but he was discovered, and killed, and carried in triumph to Falkland. The body was exhibited in the market-place; a sermon was preached over it; and congratulations were offered to James "that the man was gotten at last, though he could not be gotten alive."

The following day this piece of careless needless cruelty was

exposed, and the odium was of course increased. Failing to find the man they wanted, the court arrested Mr. Rind, the Earl of Gowrie's tutor, hoping to extort some confession which might assist them. The ordinary examination producing nothing, they put him in "the boots," and in this way crushed out some foolish stories of the earl's supposed witchcraft and diabolical acts. They extracted nothing, however, to throw light on the treason, and were at a loss what to do: when it was announced that the search was successful at last; that the man so much in question was Andrew Henderson, the earl's chamberlain. The new discovery met with little acceptance; it was believed only that the imposture this time was more skilfully managed; yet it is most likely that the incredulity was here overshooting itself; that there really was a man in the situation which James described, and that it really was Henderson. James had indeed declared that the person whom he had seen was black and grim, whilst Henderson was small and fair; and when Henderson's name was first mentioned to James, he replied, that "he knew that smike well enough, and that it was not."* But this, instead of making against the truth of Henderson's confession, appears rather to confirm it. If the court, or Patrick Galloway, the court-chaplain (for he was said to have been the agent in the business), had undertaken to provide a counterfeit, he would have produced some one whose appearance tallied better with the king's description; while again, the story which Henderson told, although agreeing in outline and in many important particulars with that of James, yet varies from it in points too little complimentary to the latter to have been forged to defend him. In spite of the unbelief of the Edinburgh ministers, we feel constrained to accept this new witness; and although it leaves the cause which led to the catastrophe more obscure than before, yet it is a caution to historical scepticism, confirming as it does the king's declaration in some of its least probable features. Except for Henderson, most persons would probably have rejected the entire account as wholly incredible; or if they had taken it to be true, they would have found an explanation of it in the king's own suspicion that young Ruthven was insane. James's folly, combined with Ruthven's madness, might have sufficed to produce every successive circumstance; and in the story of the stranger and his treasure, and in Ruthven's subsequent conduct, as described by James, there is a methodical absurdity very like insanity. We are reluctantly forced, however, to dismiss this interpretation. Henderson's evidence proves that there was an understanding of some kind between the brothers, though of what kind neither he knew nor any one.

* Calderwood vi. p. 49.

Henderson stated before the council, that on the evening of Monday the 4th of August, he was directed by the *Earl of Gowrie* to be in readiness to ride to Falkland with Mr. Alexander at four o'clock the next morning. He obeyed as he was told. They reached Falkland as the court were mounting for the hunt; and Alexander, after speaking to the king, directed him (Henderson) to return at his best speed to Perth, and to say to his brother that "his majesty would come, and would be quiet." By ten o'clock he was again at home. The earl took him into the *study*, and asked him a few questions as to the persons who were at the hunt, &c. He was then dismissed. An hour later, Gowrie told him that he would be wanted in the afternoon to assist in the capture of a Highland thief, and he must see that his arms were in order. At twelve he was going to his own house to eat something before he started, when the steward told him that he had better stay where he was; the earl's body-servant was ill, and he should carry up the dishes for his lordship's dinner. He took up the first course; and as he was following with the second, the master (Alexander) came in and spoke a few words to the earl. The latter rose immediately. They went out together; and Henderson supposing, as he said, that they were going to the Highlands, sent his boy to fetch his steel-bonnet and gauntlets. Presently after, he learnt that the king was coming; and that they were going to the meadow to meet him. He threw aside his arms, therefore, and followed in his ordinary dress. When the royal party arrived at the house, he was sent to fetch drink; and soon after the earl called him, and said, that he was to go up to the master into the gallery. The earl himself followed him thither, directing him to remain with his brother, and to do whatever he was told. He asked what it was to be. The master merely answered that he was to wait in the study till he returned.* He was then locked in; and he knew nothing more till Alexander entered with the king.

From this time, substantially if not exactly, his account agrees with that of James. "The master," he said, "at his very entry, caught the dagger from his (Henderson's) girdle, and pointing it at the king's breast, exclaimed, 'Remember you of my father's murder. Ye shall now die for it.' In another moment he would have stabbed him on the spot, but that he (Henderson) darted forward and wrenched the weapon out of his hands." James, it is

* In this most important point Henderson's evidence is strongly confirmed. An attached servant of Gowrie, who was executed for his share in the riot which followed Ruthven's death, deposed on the scaffold, when he could gain nothing by telling a lie, that he had himself seen Henderson going up into the gallery with the earl; and that Henderson, in relating to him afterwards what had taken place, assured him that he was as ignorant as himself of the object with which he had been taken there.

remembered, ungrateful for his deliverance, declared that Henderson had stood trembling and shaking, and attributed his escape to his own rhetoric. A discrepancy of this kind is, however, intelligible and natural. "Wanting the dagger," Henderson continues, and the king giving him gentle words, the master told him, "with many abominable oaths," to hold his peace; he need not be afraid; they would not hurt him if he would make such a promise as his brother and he would require of him. Ruthven then left the room. The king asked him who he was; he replied, "A servant of my lord's." "His majesty asked if my lord would do any evil to him." Henderson answered, "As God should judge him, he would himself die first." He was opening the window to give the alarm, when Alexander Ruthven re-entered. He had not seen the earl; but he said there was no remedy, the king must die. The story of the garter, absurd as it appeared, was true. Ruthven had a garter in his hand, and tried to bind the king with it, when he (Henderson again) dragged it away from him. Twice, he said, the king would have been "stickit" but for his interference; and, finally, in the last scuffle, he threw the window open, freed James from his assailant's grasp, and enabled him to call for help at the moment when his train was in the street. "Wilt thou not help?" Ruthven said to him. "Woe betide thee, thou wilt make us all dee." The next instant Sir John Ramsay entered; and Henderson, seeing that there was no more danger, and thinking that, in the excitement, he might very likely be run through the body, slipped away and concealed himself.

Such is Henderson's story, which is strongly confirmed in many of its details, and seems consistent and credible throughout. It is without the purpose or connection which would have been given to a forgery; and when the ministers at Edinburgh refused to believe the man's statement unless he was executed for complicity in treason and repeated his story on the scaffold, they left the balance of charity decidedly on the king's side. To have hanged Henderson on the ground of his own confession (as Robert Bruce, the spokesman of the Assembly on this occasion, desired), would have been a barbarous murder.

The scene in the study is, therefore, we think, to be taken as ascertained, in its essential features; and also, to some extent, the complicity of Gowrie. There is no reason for doubting that Gowrie was, as Henderson said, aware of his brother's morning ride to Falkland; and of the concealment of Henderson in the cabinet. For the meaning of it all, however, we are as much at a loss as ever. The difficulties in the supposition of an intended attack on James seem still insuperable. The Ruthvens may have shared in all the wild feelings of the times. They might have felt that a deadly feud lay between them and the king. There

is no unlikelihood in their having nourished a plan of revenge. The objection is, that their preparations point in no way to a deliberate commission of a crime. They had kinsmen enough of their own blood from whom to have chosen their confederate; or there were villains enough in Scotland of any blood, without trusting themselves to an ignorant and unarmed domestic. That Henderson had a dagger with him was only an accident; and Alexander Ruthven was equally unprovided. Such a scheme with such an accomplice was never yet devised for the murder of a king.

On the other hand, that there was a plot on the part of James to kill the Ruthvens is still more inconceivable. Henderson's evidence, if true, is of course conclusive on this point. But if we set Henderson aside, it is still preposterous that the king would have attempted to kill a popular nobleman in his own house, attended, at most, by sixteen half-armed companions. The domestic retinue of the Ruthvens outnumbered four times the train which he brought with him; the people of Perth were better subjects of their provost than of their sovereign; and the mere issue of the actual circumstances ought not to blind any reasonable thinker to the unlikelihood of the success of such an adventure if purposely undertaken. Again, we could make allowance for the habits of the age. If the king believed himself injured, he might be tempted, like his subjects, to fall back upon private revenge. But to hazard his own person in any such romantic piece of villany, was little in character with James VI.; and if the evidence were as strong against him as it is in reality insignificant and worthless, we should be still incredulous.

Here, therefore, we pause to say a few words of Mr. James the novelist. At the head of this article we have placed an exceedingly bad novel called the *King's Plot*; one of a vast multitude of such, for which we are indebted to the industry of this writer, who has used his inventive powers to make the hypothesis of the king's guilt plausible.

If there was more ability in his workmanship, we should have to quarrel with him more seriously. As the matter stands, we content ourselves with protesting against this and all similar dealings with history as unpermitted and unjust. We ask with all seriousness, by what right Mr. James, or any man, in dealing with historical persons and historical facts, presumes, on his own authority, as if he was some inspired seer into the secrets of all things, to resolve doubts into certainties—to write out three volumes of consecutive narrative in the perfect indicative tense—inventing facts where evidence fails, omitting others where evidence is inconvenient; and when we bring him to the bar and demand his au-

thorities, to tell us quietly that he is a writer of romance, not of reality, and to decline to plead? On behalf of history, we entreat the public to withhold their approbation from such productions, whatever be their imaginative attractiveness. Let it be understood that, if the romance-writer chooses to invent actions, he must be so good as to invent the actors at the same time. And for Mr. James, we invite him, if he is capable of so subjective an effort, to a few moments of self-reflection. Supposing he, Mr. James the popular novelist, were to find himself displayed in a "three volumes," practising wisdom or practising folly, as the case might be, credited with a book, for instance, which he might or might not like to acknowledge,—what would be his sensations? He would not be wholly pleased with the writer of such volumes, or admit as a valid defence, that he had been described only as doing what, in such writer's opinion, he was likely to have done. He would call the pretty "fiction" an ugly lie. He would say that he was himself the best judge of what he was "likely" to do in such and such circumstances. In reasonable probability he would indict the gifted author for a libel, and recover substantial damages. Let him consider, then, how it is like to stand with himself in the libel-court up above; and in what coin damages are said to be paid there. The toleration of "historical romance," little as men know it, is a strange evidence of their disbelief in the continued existence of men and women after they pass off out of this world. If the novelists, and for that matter the historians too, had any real idea that the names with which they deal so freely belong to living persons, who will one day call them to account, their pens would run across their paper rather less rapidly.

However, to leave this, we repeat, that if it be incredible that the Ruthvens intended to kill the king, so it is incredible that the king intended to murder them. And yet between these interpretations, what third is possible?

Robertson comes to our assistance with a speculation which is ingenious and at first sight plausible.

He links together the threads which connected the Ruthvens with the court of Elizabeth. He observes that the earl's younger brothers found a warm welcome in England after the catastrophe. He mentions, though without giving his authority, that a mysterious English ship-of-war was lying in the Forth during the summer of that year; and he conjectures that Elizabeth, alarmed at James's secret coquetry with Rome and Madrid, had instigated Gowrie, while he was in London, to re-enact the raid of Ruthven, and send the king to her a prisoner. The royal person of James had been taken into irregular custody so many times previously, that no particular respect was attached to it; and with an ade-

quate motive Elizabeth might not impossibly have conceived such an intention. If it had been made clear to her that the true interests (or what she conceived to be such) of the two countries were put in peril by James's scheming; that it was, on the whole, good that his liberty of doing mischief should be curtailed; she was neither likely herself to have felt scruples on the propriety of laying hands upon him, nor, in the state of Scotland, would there have been much difficulty in persuading an adventurous nobleman to make the attempt. Gowrie, too, was her near kinsman; and if the seizure was to be made respectable, his rank, his Calvinistic leanings, and the traditions of his family, made him a likely person to have been selected as her instrument.

At best, however, this is but a conjecture, unsupported by a particle of evidence; and in the important point of motive it breaks down. Had James been within her reach in his childhood, Elizabeth would doubtless have gladly taken possession of him. The union of the kingdoms was the constant object of the Tudor sovereigns. Their policy was to unite the royal families of the two kingdoms by intermarriage; and to constitute themselves the guardians of the Scotch princes or princesses in their minorities; if possible, to bring them up in England, with English sympathies; and either to connect the crowns in a single marriage, as Henry VIII. would have done, if he could have secured Mary for Edward; or when the sovereign of Scotland was heir-presumptive to the English crown, to render his accession easy, by breaking down the barriers of national antipathy. Elizabeth wished to marry Mary to an English nobleman; and afterwards, if she could have had James in London, and trained him as her own child, she would have given him a hold upon English affections, and in no way have injured the respect which the people were to be taught to feel for their future monarch.

But the circumstances were wholly altered at the time of the Gowrie conspiracy. Her long and glorious reign had enabled her to smooth the way for James's succession. Scotchman though he was, and although he had loved to play round the edge of mischief, dipping his fingers in it as deeply as he dared, her authority had sufficed to keep him out of serious embroilments; nor was there real danger from his present trifling. While he remained in Scotland she was able to control him sufficiently. To have carried him off in his mature manhood, when her own life was so near its inevitable close, would have stirred into activity all the old animosities between the two nations,—would have encumbered her with a captive more embarrassing, if less dangerous, than his mother had been, and would have exhibited her intended successor in the eyes of her subjects as a helpless, contemptible puppet. Elizabeth had experienced sufficient vexation

already from a royal prisoner. She was not likely in her old age to invite a similar difficulty, or to undo the labour of years by so blundering a policy.

This explanation, therefore, promises no standing-ground, and we seem to relapse into uncertainty. Nor is the story itself as yet complete. It was followed by a sequel in character with the rest; less important, though it cost another human life, but equally strange, equally vexatious and unsatisfactory.

In the spring of the year 1608, an attorney's clerk, by name Sprout, was reported to have whispered among his friends that the mystery which had so long perplexed every body was no mystery to him; that he, if he chose, could tell all about it. He was arrested; and he affirmed, on his examination before the council, that in the year of the conspiracy he had been a servant to one Logan, laird of Restalrig. In this capacity he had become privy to a correspondence between his master and the Earl of Gowrie, which had been carried on in the summer of 1600. Some of the letters he had contrived to steal; and when produced, they were found to contain the outlines of a plot for seizing the king, and imprisoning him in Fastcastle, a stronghold belonging to Logan. If these letters were genuine, the discovery of them was of course conclusive. There were circumstances about them, however, which made their authenticity more than suspicious. Sprout was known to be an adept at counterfeiting handwriting; he had delayed his confession till Logan's death made a satisfactory investigation impossible; and although he filled out the case with various details, and represented himself in his own person as having been actively guilty in arranging the scheme, the notorious debauchery and worthlessness of Logan's character—he was a villain of a merely coarse and brutal description—made it unlikely in a high degree that he would have been selected as an accomplice in treason by such a man as Gowrie; and the story was not believed.

As the simplest mode of resolving the uncertainty, Sprout was put in the boots; and he then declared that he had lied, and that the letters were written by himself. He still adhered in general, however, to the connection of Logan and Gowrie. There was a true conspiracy, he said, and he had been cognisant of it; and it answered the purposes of the council to accept his statements. He was arraigned and condemned for misprision of treason; and his crushed legs having been repaired sufficiently to enable him to appear on the scaffold, he was executed. A voluntary confession, which brought the maker of it to his end, would usually command some confidence. Under any circumstances, it is entitled to weight. In the present instance, nevertheless, it is remarkable that even the king's friends were not satisfied with

their witness. Archbishop Spotswood, in his history, doubts whether he should even mention so improbable a story—regarding it “as a very fiction; and a mere invention of the man’s own brains,”—and it seems to have been regarded as one of those diseased confessions into which men are sometimes tempted by an appetite for notoriety, like the acknowledgments of Satanic compacts so often made by unhappy women who died the victims of their vanity.*

Spotswood’s rejection of Sprot will justify ours; and once more, therefore, we fall back on the barren narrative; there, if any where, to find the truth. The present writer is not so unwise as to suppose that he can explain a mystery with which contemporaries were perplexed, to whom the persons of the actors and a thousand other circumstances now lost for ever were familiarly known; nor will he waste the reader’s time with unprofitable guesses which will lead him nowhere. It will be something, however, if we can separate with distinctness what is obscure from what is certain; and looked at carefully, the story will be found to yield, if not its full secret, yet some conclusions on which we may rest.

If we run over in our minds the outline of the events of the 5th of August, the chief difficulties will be seen to be two:

First—why did James consent to accompany Alexander Ruthven, without attendants, into a secluded part of Gowrie’s house? And second—why was Andrew Henderson placed in the study?

We know, from James’s word, that some bitter secret existed between himself and the Ruthvens; he said that he had matter against them to take their lives if he pleased to do it. And when he was once in those lonely galleries, with the doors locked behind him, sudden panic may have led to expressions of distrust, and distrust have led to anger; and when the hot words had once found vent, the remaining tragedy might have followed with the greater ease the less it was premeditated. But what took him into the gallery at all? We will not affront the king’s understanding with believing that he was enticed by a pot of gold. The many lies which he certainly told entitle us to disregard his mere word; and, after making all allowance for his necessities and his avarice, we feel that in this point the general scepticism was just. We must reject the story, in the form at least in which it was related by himself. It was not this, but some-

* Spotswood’s History, p. 509. The archbishop was present at Sprot’s trial, and also witnessed his death. He made no secret of his incredulity even at the time. “A little before the execution, Mr. John Spotswood, bishop of Glasgow, said to Mr. Patrick Galloway, ‘I am afraid this man will make us all ashamed.’ Mr. Patrick answered, ‘Let alone, my lord; I shall warrant him;’ and, indeed, he had the most part of the speech to him on the scaffold.” Calderwood, vi. p. 780.

thing far different from this, of which Alexander Ruthven spoke to him after his hurried ride from Falkland; and the real business which tempted him was something which he was either ashamed, or, for some other reason, did not venture to confess.

All the circumstances unite to force this conclusion upon us. *There already existed some secret*, we must repeat again and again, to which both brothers were a party. It has occurred to us that this secret may have been connected with Gowrie's reputation as a magician. The room to which James was taken was Gowrie's cabinet. Ruthven may have offered to show him either the philosopher's stone, or the elixir vite, or the inscription on the seal of Solomon—some mystic absurdity, or some natural discovery supposed to be mystic, some experiment in which Henderson's assistance may have been required. Something of this kind may easily have excited James's curiosity; while the tremors and sense of guilt with which the dabbling in these occult matters must have been accompanied would have kept him silent afterwards, and at the time might have agitated him into panic.

Either this it may have been, or one of a thousand other possibilities. But when they crossed the hall there can, we think, have been no intention, on Ruthven's part, of any act of violence. He may have had questions to ask the king; he may have had expostulations in secret to make to him; but assuming (as we are satisfied that we may assume) the scene in the study to have been accurately described, we are forced to look on it as an unpremeditated accident. We are forced to suppose that a *quarrel took place in the suite of rooms between the hall-staircase and the study-door*, when Henderson first became a witness of the interview. We do not know how long they were in these rooms, or what took place in them; but we observe that, whereas James says that on entering the study he asked if Henderson was the man whom he was brought to see, Henderson himself heard the king use no such words at all; he describes Ruthven's attack as instantaneous, as if it was the consequence of something else immediately antecedent. What, then, was this? A gleam of light is thrown upon it by a passage in a letter of Sir Henry Neville, Lord Gowrie's friend, to Sir Ralph Linwood. Neville was likely to have informed himself carefully on a matter which affected him so nearly. And if he has touched the right clue, we can understand readily why we have so little information on so serious a catastrophe; and why (which otherwise would be inexplicable) the wiser statesmen of both kingdoms have left us no record of their opinions.

Neville's words are these: "Out of Scotland we hear that there is no good agreement, but rather an open dissidence, between the king and his wife; and many are of opinion that the

discovery of some affection between her and the Earl of Gowrie's brother, who was killed with him, was the truest cause and motive of that tragedy."

Mr. James has done his best to bring this hint into discredit by the exaggerated use which he has made of it; and it was perhaps nothing more than a contemporary conjecture. If a guess, however, it was one of those happy guesses which explain difficulties without involving us in extravagance, and enable us to see how events may have happened without straining the ordinary probabilities of human action. James was jealous of the queen, as the best evidence shows, without just cause. Murray had fallen a victim to his suspicions, and the queen had been slandered. Let us suppose him similarly jealous of young Ruthven, and the subject to have risen between them in these rooms. Ruthven, devoted, not dishonourably, to his mistress, may have spoken freely, as he naturally would speak to a prince whom he despised. The angry words may have leapt to and fro; James, as he never failed to do in his uncourteous insolence, may have touched some delicate and sensitive point of feeling; then, in turn, Ruthven's passion may have brought up before him the injuries of his house; and in a moment of anger he may have seen in the caitiff prince who was quaking before him, not a king of Scotland, but a mere miserable human wretch, whose longer life the world could well dispense with.

This is, of course, nothing more than a suggestion of the manner in which the catastrophe may have been caused; yet other probabilities point in the same direction. In the two years which followed, the Ruthven family were the occasion of a standing feud between James and the queen. We find accounts of secret interviews between the latter and the two younger brothers of the Earl of Gowrie, who escaped to England. In 1603 Beatrice Ruthven, who had been sent away from court, was secretly brought into the palace at midnight, and state-secrets of grave importance communicated to her: the queen and the Ruthvens formed a party on one side, and James on the other. Such incidents are slight in themselves, but they are indicative of a tissue of circumstances underneath the texture which was presented to the world. The genuine picture was painted over with a poor daub, and only here and there the original forms and colours become visible.

Finally, Sir Henry Neville's conjecture will explain what otherwise it is hard to account for,—Elizabeth's outward acquiescence in James's story. Gowrie was as near of kin to her as James himself; and the interest which she exhibited in the exiled family, if it does not disprove her belief in the guilt of Gowrie and his brother, was held to show at the time that she gave but

dubious credit to it. But she probably felt that an investigation might compromise important interests; that the secure succession of the Scotch prince was the only visible means by which the union of the kingdoms could be effected; and that it was better not to press an inquiry which might exhibit James in a light too contemptible to be endured. We may satisfy ourselves, perhaps, that she acquitted him of intentional crime. His folly, miserable as it seemed, was not too great for England to bear in consideration of the benefits which he would bring with him.

ART. II.—CRIME IN ENGLAND, AND ITS TREATMENT.

Nineteenth Report of the Inspectors appointed to visit the different Prisons of Great Britain, presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty. London, 1856.

Reports of the Directors of Convict Prisons for the Year 1855, presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty. London, 1856.

England and Wales: Tables showing the Number of Criminal Offenders for the Year 1854, presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty. London, 1855.

Crime: its Amount, Causes, and Remedies. By Frederic Hill, Barrister-at-law, late Inspector of Prisons. London, 1853.

Crime in England: its Relation, Character, and Extent, as developed from 1801 to 1848. By Thomas Plint. London, 1851.

Reformatory Schools for the Children of the Perishing and Dangerous Classes, and for Juvenile Offenders. By Mary Carpenter. London, 1851.

On the Principles of Criminal Law. London, 1846.

It is difficult to say whether the excess or the absence of party-feeling is the greater evil. Suffering under the latter, we may be apt to exaggerate its disadvantages. They are forced upon our attention. But we ought not to overlook whatever counterbalancing good, or (if this phrase be demurred to) partial compensations, may accompany them.

Among these, not the least is the following: that men's minds, set free from the more exciting, though not more important topics of political controversy, have leisure to deal with those great social problems which, while our eyes have been turned in another direction, have assumed such a vast magnitude, and so threatening a character. How to promote and secure the physical health of the people; to increase their means of intellectual training; to establish on a happier foundation the relations of the employer

and the employed; to diminish pauperism, and turn pauper-labour to the best account;—these are matters, the successful treatment of which is felt to be the proper business of the highest statesmanship. The attention devoted to them, and to kindred subjects, by such men as Lord John Russell, Lord Stanley, and Sir John Pakington, is one of the most hopeful signs of the times. It seems to give promise of the solution of some at least of the difficulties that surround them. Men who have been trained in the habits, or who live in the expectation of office, generally avoid taking up questions till the time for dealing with them practically is at hand. The *executive* character of their minds, which fits them for the work of government, and which is confirmed by familiarity with it, keeps them aloof, by a kind of instinct, from matters as yet wholly indeterminate.

Of all the social problems which can engage a nation, at once the most urgent and the most difficult is that which the word CRIME suggests. Others involve, comparatively speaking, mere matters of convenience. This is, or may become, a question of life and death. The Sphynx proposes her riddle; we must discover it, and annihilate her, or ourselves perish. Society exists only by obedience to law, and crime is the defiance and violation of law. It is impossible, however, to grapple effectively with it till we know its real character and extent. Statistical returns, the reports of prison-inspectors and gaol-chaplains, and, what is almost more valuable, the personal testimony of those—the Howards and Mrs. Frys of our own day—who have gone down into the dark hiding-places of sin to seek and save them that were lost, have given us, it is true, much valuable information, which the most wicked indifference of an earlier period, and its inferior organisation for purposes of inquiry, had hitherto withheld. But much still remains unknown which it is essential to know. The experience of philanthropists is necessarily limited—confined to a few individual cases. Inadequacy characterises also official returns and reports. Crime and *detected* crime are not yet convertible terms. Government statistics, therefore, present us with a part of the case only. We cannot hope that it will ever be otherwise. But there can be no doubt that, however deficient such returns may and must be, they do approximate much more closely to a faithful representation of the total delinquencies of the kingdom than at any previous period. The percentage of acquittals to committals is yearly diminishing, notwithstanding the greater advantages allowed to prisoners for purposes of defence. Many circumstances have conspired to this result. Our police-arrangements are better; the old watchmen, who, so far from affording protection to others, only earned it for themselves by their decrepitude, have vanished; the character of the judicial

bench is beyond suspicion as regards its integrity. If stipendiary magistrates were allowed to supersede country clergymen and retired traders at quarter and borough sessions, the learning and general competence of its ministers, low as well as high, would be equally unassailable. Laws which, by prohibiting natural rights, or by creating artificial offences, were stimulants of crime, have been repealed; crimes and their penalties have been more justly balanced. As the law and its administrators have thus become more worthy of respect, greater respect has come to be entertained for them. The increased freedom consequent thereon of prosecutors, witnesses, and jurors, from scruples within and intimidation without, interfering with the discharge of their duties, has materially lessened guilt's chance of escape before or on trial. Comparison of the Criminal Returns of our own with an earlier period is, therefore, unfair to the former. It places us at inequitable disadvantage, for which we must make allowance, unfortunately without knowing precisely what allowance to make. There are general indications, however, which sanction a hopeful view. Let us briefly review some of those indications. Practically, every one knows that if crime has not decreased, it has become less dangerous. A degree of security, both of person and property, is felt now which probably was unknown at any past period of our history. Guilt has not been destroyed; but it has been, to a certain extent, disarmed and driven out of sight. It has lost its original boldness. Instead of stopping carriages on Hounslow Heath, it pilfers in the streets of large cities. Offences against property without violence form at present the staple crime of England. We do not say that this is a change necessarily for the better, but it is a change which is, at any rate, worthy of notice: it shows at least that crime is *weaker* than before. Another and less equivocal sign is the great improvement in public manners which marks this generation, compared with the generations that have preceded it. The literature of the day bears conspicuous witness to the growth, at any rate, of outward decency. The novels of Scott and Dickens are in favourable moral contrast with those of Fielding, and Smollett, and Sterne. Innocent and instructive amusements have taken the place of those which were neither innocent nor instructive. Words and allusions which sixty years ago were common in the mouths of "persons of quality," would now be deemed unclean in the mouth of any respectable scavenger, and might even be resented by him from others. Vice, then, if we can say no more for it, is certainly less *gross* than it was.*

* See the evidence of Mr. Francis Place before a committee of the House of Commons on Education, 1835, extracted in Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, vol. iii. pp. 241-244.

These symptoms, though it may not do to lay too much stress upon them in our social diagnosis, are, so far as they go, favourable. Other facts, in part, no doubt connected with those stated before, are seemingly no less encouraging. Mr. Horace Mann tells us that between 1818 (the date of our earliest statistics on the subject) and 1851, the increase of day-scholars in England has been 218 per cent, and of Sunday scholars 404 per cent; while the increase of population was but 54 per cent.* The hare, therefore, is gaining on the tortoise. Whether it will ever overtake it, be able to make up for the latter's long start, we will not here speculate. Whatever view be entertained of the influence of education upon crime, the efforts to promote it which have been of late so generally and energetically made bear witness to a growth of public spirit and benevolence, which cannot have failed, one would imagine, to manifest themselves in other ways also. Nor have men, while more regardful of their fellows, been at all indifferent to themselves. If they have remembered to "do good and communicate," they have not forgotten that "the merciful man doeth good to his own self." Property, therefore, has also outstripped population in the rapidity of its increase; the former having multiplied itself fourfold in the same space of time wherein the latter has nearly doubled itself.† We are not among those (if there be any such) who take the material interests of a nation as an infallible index of its virtue. Neither are we among those who, with equal though counter exaggeration, deem that physical prosperity must necessarily be in the inverse ratio of moral and spiritual well-being. There is truth in Goldsmith's lines :

"Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

But the two things do not necessarily go together. If indolence is the symptom and parent of evil, industry, when directed to the attainment of ends not in themselves vicious, is the sign and source of much good. It necessitates the exercise of many virtues, which are essential as the foundation of character, though miserably insufficient when they make up the whole superstructure too,—the virtues of integrity, foresight, punctuality. Though not so closely connected as many men imagine, the common-*weal* is thus not altogether necessarily opposed to the common-*wealth*.

National education and riches, then, have increased faster than the numbers of the people; the outward signs of immorality in the literature, amusements, manners, and conversation of all classes have greatly diminished; charity is more fervent and

* Educational Census for 1851, pp. 15, 16.

† Census of Great Britain in 1851, p. 55.

active than it was ; every citizen feels himself securer than his fathers were from outrage and violence. Is the community which makes so fair a show outwardly but a whited sepulchre, the decorous hiding-place of corruption and death, a goodly apple rotten at the core ? It has advisers who would persuade it so, like the physicians who perplexed M. de Pourceaugnac : " Parbleu ! je ne suis pas malade." " Mauvais signe lorsqu'un malade ne sent pas son mal." They aim to prove that with the more general diffusion of education, the unprecedented growth of capital, the revival of a deeper sense of individual and national responsibility, guided by a wiser social philosophy than our fathers felt and knew, crime has gone on increasing too as fast as education and wealth, faster than population. Now we have pointed out why any comparison of statistical documents is unfair to the present age. It shows only the relative quantity and quality of *detected* crime at the periods it reviews, and not of the actual offences. The very fact that more of the crime committed is discovered now than before, only shows that society has taken up arms more resolutely than ever against it, and is resolved to drag it from its secret dens into the light it hates, and in which, we hope, it is ultimately destined to perish. But there is confusion involved in the words "increase of crime," which makes them fertile of misapprehension. A person is told that, within a specified time, crime has augmented, in regard to population, at the rate, according to some, of three, to others, of six to one. He infers that the *criminal class* has increased relatively to all other classes of the same community in the same proportion. There cannot be a greater mistake. Every unit added to that class implies a five, or six, or ten-fold addition to the aggregate of offences, which alone is exhibited in the tables. There are many crimes to each criminal. Thefts, as we have said, make up the great bulk of offences in modern England. The common thief, it is ascertained, may calculate ordinarily on a period of six years' impunity. The average of his earnings (if we may call them so) is about 150*l.* a-year.* That many offences must be yearly perpetrated to bring in this comfortable income is obvious. Of all committals in England, Mr. Frederic Hill calculates that 32 per cent are *re-committals*.† Other facts, pointing in the same direction, might be adduced ; but these are sufficient. The social evils of our time are great enough without exaggeration, which, to the extent to which it is sometimes carried, is likely to produce despair rather than to rouse to vigorous resistance. If, in spite of the counteractions which have been enumerated, guilt, like a gangrene, were, *not*

* Report of the Constabulary Force Commissioners, 1839, pp. 12 and 44 (quoted in the *Edinburgh Review*, July 1849, art. i. p. 13).

† Crime, &c. p. 321.

slowly, but steadily extending its ravages over the body corporate, we could do nothing but wait hopelessly till it reached the seat of life ; for it would be springing from no accidental and temporary causes, but from the principles on which society in England is organised,—principles which it is next to impossible to revise and reverse, for they are interwoven with its life. And we cannot take states to pieces, to reconstruct them artificially after a better model. As Sir James Mackintosh said, they are not made, but grow. We may and ought to be aware of the peculiar dangers to which a particular constitution of society is liable, and should do our best to neutralise them. But if that constitution is itself essentially vicious, if the source of life is tainted, we can but defer the evil day ; which, under such circumstances, had best come swiftly. We are but damming up the torrent, that at the last it may burst with more overwhelming and desolating power.

The fact, then, that the quantity of *detected offences* against the law is more in proportion to the population now than was the case half a century ago,—how much more it is difficult to say, computations vary widely,*—does not warrant the conclusion that *those who perpetrate them* have multiplied at an equal rate. It is even compatible with the supposition that that class is, relatively to all others, less numerous and only more active than heretofore. We say it is compatible with the supposition ; for the fact is hard of ascertainment. There are considerations, however, which give a certain degree of probability to the more hopeful view. If crime were advancing with rapid strides among the hitherto honest orders of society, it is almost inevitable that a growing demoralisation of the community would ensue. There is a *consensus* of all the parts of political, as well as of natural, organisations. If one member suffers, the whole body must suffer with it. But this demoralisation is not visible. On the contrary, in spite of many questionable, though isolated, phenomena, a higher moral tone than was customary a generation ago is clearly traceable. The presumption therefore remains, till a stronger presumption can be shown on the other side, that on the whole we are not worse, but rather better, than our forefathers. We are not on this account to remit our exertions against crime ; but to redouble them, with livelier anticipations of success. It was the first Napoleon's policy, when he would inspirit his soldiers for a great effort, to magnify the odds in their favour, to exaggerate the strength of his own forces, and to disparage that of the enemy. If he showed his unscrupulousness thereby, he

* An increase of 350 per cent over population between 1805 and 1845 is commonly stated. Mr. Plint, in his ably-reasoned essay (named at the head of this article), pp. 12, 13, shows ground for reducing this to less than 200 per cent increase.

showed his knowledge of human nature. The very same encouragement which he was in the habit of administering by falsehood, we may derive, it is believed, from truth. It is an advantage we have not felt disposed, as our readers have seen, to throw away.

We will now endeavour to present the real facts of the case, so far as we can gather them from statistical sources; and to indicate their bearing on certain moot questions, as to the conditions which seem, on the one hand, to check, and, on the other hand, to favour, the production of crime.

The Government Returns divide offences into six classes: (1.) Offences against the person; (2.) Offences against property, committed with violence; (3.) Offences against property, committed without violence; (4.) Malicious offences against property; (5.) Forgery, and offences against the currency; (6.) Other offences not included in the above classes,—under which last division are comprised high treason, sedition, riot, and other direct outrages against constituted authorities, violations of the game-laws, perjury, &c. The total of offences in 1854 (the latest year for which tables are published) was 29,359. Of these, 23,917 were offences against property without violence. The increase of commitments during the year in question, Mr. Redgrave tells us, was 8·5 per cent over the four preceding years, and 7·5 per cent over the average of the ten preceding years. This increase, however, was altogether confined to the several modes of offence against property, chiefly those without violence; and those against the currency, together with forgery. The former have increased 11 per cent since 1853; the latter to much the same extent, viz. from 850 in 1853 to 963 in 1854. Other offences fluctuate greatly in amount from time to time; these two classes seem steadily on the increase. They are, it will be observed, just the offences which professional criminals are most likely to practise; they therefore do not argue general demoralisation. The proportion which they hold to the total of crime is becoming constantly greater. In 1854, offences against property without violence were more than 81 per cent of the aggregate of all offences; in 1845, 76·2 per cent; in 1841, only 73·2 per cent. "In forgeries of Bank-of-England notes," says Mr. Redgrave, "there was an increase of 33 per cent in the last year's commitments, and the offence has been on the increase for the last ten years. The same remark applies to uttering counterfeit coin, in which on the last year alone the increase was 11·1 per cent."* The increase of offences of these two classes may in part spring from the greater dexterity, and not solely from the added numbers, of those who

* Criminal Returns, p. iv.

have recourse to them. We have already mentioned the calculated value of a thief's annual plunder, and the average term of freedom on which he can reckon. Forgery and coining obviously are crimes confined to but a few; since secrecy and skill are essential to their perpetration. But to make their dishonest toil profitable, to pay the expenses even of the necessary instruments for carrying it on, these few must individually be guilty of a vast number of offences. Mr. Hill mentions a case in which fourteen persons, the families of three brothers, are computed, as utterers of base coin, to have committed 20,000 distinct offences.* We arrive, then, at the comforting conclusion, that the crimes which are most on the increase are those which least imply a corresponding increase of criminals, and which least indicate a decadent state of public morals generally. The Criminal Returns give us an elaborate comparison, under each head of their sixfold division, of 1854 with 1853. The contrast, however, of two successive years, or of any *two* years merely, is little instructive. We need a longer period to exhibit tendencies, to eliminate accidental and disturbing forces of only temporary moment. For this purpose, groups of years ought to be taken. We therefore borrow from a more copious table, by Mr. Redgrave, the following presentment of the total number of persons committed for trial, or bailed, in each of the two *quinquennial periods* ending respectively in 1849 and 1854, and the offences with which the persons were charged :

CLASS OF OFFENCES.		1850-4.	1845-9.
No. 1. Offences against the person		10,294	10,318
„ 2. Offences against property, committed with violence		9,515	8,958
„ 3. Offences against property, committed without violence		109,930	109,075
„ 4. Malicious offences against property		1,274	1,028
„ 5. Forgery, and offences against the currency		4,200	2,729
„ 6. Other offences not included in the above classes		3,486	4,300
Total		138,699	136,408

The increase of malicious offences against property alone seems out of harmony with the remarks that have preceded. They are not likely to be the work of those who live by wrong-doing. Mr. Redgrave, however, in stating the multiplication of such offences between 1853 and 1854, explains it as “arising chiefly from the number of offences on railway-lines, many of them of

* Hill, p. 58.

a mischievous rather than a malicious character."* With this single exception, we may note incidentally, the crime of England is in curious harmony with its master-passion. Guilt dogs the heels of commercial enterprise like a mocking shadow, not without a distorted resemblance to the object from whose brightness it is cast. Eagerness for *gain* inspires alike the honest man and the rogue. Both have an unparalleled avidity for property,—the latter without sufficiently discriminating *meum* and *tuum*. When war was the mania of England, crimes of violence abounded. Now that commerce is its god, we have crimes of fraud. The social state of a nation, the habitudes of its respectable citizens, are thus not obscurely mirrored in those of its outcasts. But the matter is too large to enter further upon here. We return to details not less instructive, if less attractive, than more general speculation.

We have already stated that the increase of crime in 1854 was 7·5 per cent over the average of the ten preceding years. It is desirable, however (lest we fall into the error of estimating the whole by possibly an exceptional part, of taking a retrogressive bend in the river for its prevailing course, or, like the ancient philosopher, of presenting a single brick as a sample of the house), to make a wider survey. Mr. Plint's work gives us information up to the point where the retrospect of the Returns of this year stops short. He affirms that "the ratio of crime to population in 1801 was 54 in 100,000; and in 1845, 156 in 100,000, or less than 200 per cent increase."† This increase relatively to population he thus distributes over the several portions of time between the extreme limits:

1801 to 1821 . . .	112·0 per cent.
1821 to 1831 . . .	26·9 "
1821 to 1836 . . .	32·1 "
1821 to 1845 . . .	35·6 "
1831 to 1845 . . .	6·9 "
1836 to 1845 . . .	2·7 "

Thus, though up to 1845 crime was still increasing faster than population, the rate of its increase was being, on the whole, gradually retarded. Coming down later, we have, in appearance, still more cheering results. "The number of committals in 1844," said Professor Walsh, in a paper read to the statistical section of the British Association, at its recent meeting in Chel-

* Criminal Returns, p. iv.

† Page 13. The text says "1 in 54" and "1 in 156" respectively. This is obviously a misprint, which it would be easy to detect, even if the numbers were not correctly given, "54 in 100,000" and "156 in 100,000," for the years 1801 and 1845 respectively, in p. 11.

tenham, "was but 26,542, and in 1854, 29,529: the population had increased in the interval in a greater proportion." By the comparison, however, of individual years almost any result might be gained. In 1842, for example, the number of commitments was 31,309, which shows a positive decrease in 1854, and not merely one relatively to population. The average of crime for a term of years is the only fair criterion; and that shows an increase in 1854 over the average of the ten preceding years, the extent of which has already been intimated.

Crime has not, then, within the last fifty years increased equally in equal portions of time. Is it distributed uniformly over the surface of the country, or is it more abundant in some districts than in others? If groups of 100,000 individuals were taken, without selection, from different parts of England—from Cornwall and Cumberland—from Lincolnshire and Lancashire—would they be found to contain much the same proportion of offenders? Not so. For in Cumberland, in 1848, there were but 70 offenders in every 100,000 of the population; while in Middlesex there were 277—nearly quadruple the number of the northern county. Nor does the ratio of the increase of crime in different districts correspond (as we might perhaps have expected) with the actual amount of crime they at present exhibit. Where offences are least numerous, there they are most rapidly multiplying; where they are most numerous, they increase more slowly. Thus, from 1801 to 1845 the rate of augmentation of crime in Middlesex was less than 100 per cent; in Cumberland it was from 350 to 400 per cent.

The annexed table, which we extract from Mr. Plint's essay, is on this point most instructive:

COUNTIES IN WHICH CRIME WAS THE LOWEST IN 1801.			COUNTIES IN WHICH CRIME WAS THE HIGHEST IN 1801.		
County.	Ratio of crime to 100,000 of pop. in 1801.	Increase of crime, 1801 to 1845.	County.	Ratio of crime to 100,000 of pop. in 1801.	Increase of crime, 1801 to 1845.
1. Westmoreland .	15	450 to 500	31. Gloucester..	56	250 to 300
2. Cumberland ...	15	350 to 400	32. Norfolk	59	150 to 200
3. Durham	16	350 to 400	33. Essex	63	150 to 200
4. Cornwall	23	200 to 250	34. Sussex	64	100 to 150
5. Derby	24	250 to 300	35. Southampton	66	100 to 150
6. Northumberland	24	200 to 250	36. Wilts	67	100 to 150
7. Rutland	24	350 to 400	37. Kent.....	68	100 to 150
8. Lincoln	27	300 to 350	38. Surrey	73	100 to 150
9. York	27	150 to 200	39. Warwick ...	92	100 to 150
10 Devon	27	350 to 400	40. Middlesex ..	148	under 100

It is only necessary to add Mr. Plint's pregnant and philosophical commentary :

"The great fact indicated by the different ratios of increase is unquestionably, that in countries densely populated, the incentives and occasions of crime have nearly reached their maximum; and that in countries in which the population is becoming more dense,—that is, more aggregated in towns or cities,—those incentives and occasions are just beginning to be felt."*

The facts and considerations just presented throw light upon a much-disputed question as to the relative moral influence of agriculture and manufacturing industry upon a people. There are some who maintain the baneful effects of the latter, including therein both the factory and mining systems. To make out their case—nay, to give it even *primâ facie* plausibility—they should prove that, in proportion as these extend, crime multiplies at an accelerated ratio; and that where they have not been introduced, crime is at its *minimum*. We need hardly say, nothing of this has ever been established. On the contrary, during the last fifty years, while, as we have already seen, the rate of progress of crime has been much retarded, England has been gradually becoming more of a cotton-spinning and less of a corn-growing country. Nor, to descend to narrower ground, is the criminality of English counties small in proportion to their exclusively or predominantly agricultural character. For example, in Berkshire, in 1848, the number of criminals in every 100,000 of the inhabitants was 270, while in Lancashire it was only 193. In the same year, Suffolk was, relatively to its population, more criminal than Nottingham, Essex than Lancaster, Oxford than Derby, Wilts than York. The returns of 1854 exhibit a greater increase of offences in some prevailingly agricultural than in other mainly manufacturing counties. To take a few instances: crime in Hertford has multiplied at the rate of 23·2 per cent, in Lancashire at only 8 per cent; in Essex at the rate of 13·4 per cent, in Stafford at 2·8 per cent; in Suffolk, 19·4 per cent, in Chester, 2·5 per cent. Further, the delinquencies which occur in manufacturing districts are, for the most part, perpetrated by others than permanent artisan residents. Mr. Plint (whose book contains much valuable statistical information, as well as sound reasoning, of which we have freely availed ourselves) quotes police-returns for Manchester, exhibiting the class or occupation of those who were summarily convicted, or committed for trial, in 1849. From these it appears that

"The really manufacturing section of the Manchester population, though constituting one-half of the whole, only commits one-sixth of

* Plint, pp. 15, 16.

the crime which is tried at the sessions and the assizes, and rather more than one-eighth of that which is summarily disposed of. It is also shown that the class of labourers, though little more than one-sixteenth of the population, and the various classes of handicrafts, constituting one-sixth of the population, each commit nearly as much crime as the manufacturing population; and that the really criminal and profligate class [thieves and prostitutes], combined with the class having *no trade*, and who may be concluded to belong to one or other of the two last-named, commit *one-third* of all the crime in Manchester.*

Further, as the same essayist points out, since the bulk of crime is perpetrated by what are called the lower classes,—not that they are more vicious than others, but that, from various causes, their transgressions take the form rather of illegal outbreaks than of tolerated sins,—the percentage of offences in any county will depend very much on the numerical proportion of the several social orders therein. The morality of the higher, middle, and operative classes may be on a par with that of their peers elsewhere; yet where the last is in excess, the percentage of crime to the whole population will be in excess also. This is of course the case in all densely-populated districts, and therefore in those which are seats of manufacturing industry. Allowance, then, should be made for this element of inequality in any comparative estimates of the morality of rural and factory populations. It does not, we may add, indicate the superiority of rustic virtue, that the crimes which most display what is distinctively called *vice*, sheer malignity,—which can be least attributed to professional malefactors, and which, therefore, in their frequency or infrequency, are the best key to the *morale* of those among whom chiefly they are perpetrated,—the two classes of offences against the person, and malicious offences against property, form a larger proportion of the grand total of offences in agricultural than in manufacturing localities. These considerations, in their collective force, seem to warrant the emphatic language of Mr. Clay, the chaplain of Preston gaol: “It is not a manufacturing population, as such, which fosters crime. It is not manufacturing Manchester, but multitudinous Manchester, which gives birth to whatever criminality may be imputable to it. It is the large town, to which both idle profligates and practised villains resort, as a likely field for the indulgence of sensuality, or the prosecution of schemes of plunder.”

Such facts as those to which attention has now been directed, while they relieve the industrial organisation of a large and increasing proportion of our people from unmerited reproach, open out some very serious questions. Great cities are the refuge and

* Plint, pp. 123, 124.

parents of crime. The present age is emphatically the age of great cities. Its tendency is to collect people together from outlying points into continually-increasing clusters, to condense population. "In 1801, the people of England were on an average 153 yards asunder, and 108 yards in 1851; the mean distance apart of their houses was 362 yards in 1801, and 252 yards in 1851."* Within the same period, "while the population of the country and of the small towns increased 71 per cent, the population of the large towns increased 189 per cent."† Thus the growth of the commercial and manufacturing interests in England,—though not directly the source of crime, though exercising, all things considered, an effect the reverse of demoralising on those engaged in them,—innocently supplies what seems to be a condition of crime. It is manufacturing Manchester that makes multitudinous Manchester. Where wealth and numbers are concentrated within a limited space, the predatory classes spring up under their shade, like fungi beneath the protecting boughs of some stately tree; or, to vary the metaphor, they have attached themselves to the manufacturing and commercial classes, as parasites to some nobler animal, on whose lifeblood they feed. If increasing population and wealth are the condition of increasing delinquency, the latter multiplying far more rapidly than the two former, and only slackening its rate of progress when it reaches a certain high maximum, to go much beyond which would be anarchy,—if this be the case, how to deal with it in a country like ours becomes a momentous problem. The obvious remedy (if it were feasible) would be to recur to that state of society which political economists call "stationary;"—which J. S. Mill so fascinatingly depicts,—stationary in capital and in numbers, but not stationary in knowledge and in virtue. No, nor stationary even in industrial improvements; but applying them to produce "their legitimate effect of abridging labour," instead of building up colossal fortunes, and increasing the number of labourers. At present, however, we might as well set out on a voyage of discovery for Utopia, as dream of introducing the "stationary state." In default thereof, what expedient can we find?

By many education is held up as the panacea—all sufficient to prevent the yet innocent and to reform the actual offender. We will briefly speak of this specific. By education in this connection is generally meant instruction in reading and writing, with a slight infusion of arithmetic. Many, indeed, protest against any such restricted sense being put upon the term, as they use it; but we must judge of them by their conduct rather

* Census, 1851, p. 16.

† Ibid. p. 14.

than by their words. In spite of their disclaimer, they are perpetually appealing in support of their views to prison-reports, and comparing the numbers of those who cannot read, or who cannot write, or who can do either or both only imperfectly, with each other, and with the much smaller aggregate of those who can read and write well. They even press "marriage-marks" into the service, and are rejoiced beyond measure if they can find a county in which an excess of crime is accompanied by an excess of those who "on the happiest day of their lives" signed the register with a cross. If there were reason, taking the common criteria, to believe that morality did vary as education, there is one circumstance which should prevent the conclusion, viz. that the criteria are not trustworthy. With regard, first, to marriage-marks, Mr. Horace Mann tells us that, "from various causes, some who can write nevertheless decline to sign the register."* Secondly, as to the reading and writing tests, considered as a clue to the amount of instruction received by convicts, the testimony of Mr. Charles Pearson, City solicitor, is worth hearing. The following is from his evidence before a Committee of the House of Lords in 1847:

"The returns received from the prisons as to the state of acquirements and education of prisoners are to a surprising extent in contradiction to what I believe to be the actual facts of the case. . . . They (the prisoners) are perfectly aware that they are now objects of great compassion; that ignorance is supposed to be the cause of their position. For the purpose of the prison-returns, the question to them is, 'Can you read?' 'No.' 'Can you write?' 'No.' Prisoners recommend themselves to the compassion of the officers of the prison, who place them under the chaplain and the schoolmaster of the prison. In the course of a month or two they acquire a degree of intelligence, and a capacity for reading and writing, which would seem to show that the prison-school far surpasses any other seminary for education that the mind can conceive of, such is the rapidity of their progress. But let them get into the world again, and be brought again to prison, the same questions are put to them,—'Can you read?' 'No.' 'Can you write?' 'No.'—I have been *from my earliest infancy*† a devoted advocate of education; but I am satisfied that the cause of juvenile crime is not the absence of education."

He elsewhere states his conviction, derived from personal intercourse with the juvenile delinquents in Newgate, that "as a class they were not destitute of education, but that, on the

* Educational Census, p. 32, note.

† Mr. Pearson's parents and instructors were fortunate if, in his passage through "life's strange eventful history," he omitted the part of

"the whining schoolboy,
With his satchel and shining morning face,
Creeping like snail unwillingly to school."

contrary, a very large portion of them had received a considerable degree of instruction.”*

But if we could rely on the ordinary tests, they would by no means establish the position they are often used to prove. Mr. Clay stated before the Lords, that “the cases of extreme ignorance among the juvenile and adult prisoners amount to 43 or 45 per cent.” “If,” says Mr. Mann, “the marriages of *minors* in 1851 be taken (which will probably show what was being taught, and how, about ten years ago), the extraordinary fact presents itself that of 31,987 minors married in 1851 (7737 males and 24,250 females), *no less than 52·6 per cent were unable to sign their names* (viz. 42·7 per cent of the males, and 55·8 per cent of the females),”†—that is to say, ignorance was greater among the population out of prison than among the samples of the criminal class of which Mr. Clay speaks.

Again, in Lancashire, in 1845, the ratio of criminals who could not read and write to all criminals was 13·7 per cent more than in Kent; of those who could read and write imperfectly, 12·8 per cent less. The more instructed county (Kent) had 158 criminals in 100,000 of its population; the less instructed only 146 in 100,000, giving an excess to the former of 7½ per cent.‡ This statement has a double significance: the manufacturing county, with less education, exhibits less crime than the agricultural county, with more education.

But further, if a close, and, with proper allowance for counteracting tendencies, a virtually unvarying correspondence between crime and ignorance could be detected, it would be an unwarrantable, and, we believe, an untrue inference, that the ignorance produced the crime. To prove things connected as cause and effect, something more than constant association,—which in this case you have *not*,—is needed. The alleged invariable concomitants may be concurrent effects of some other cause; and this, in those instances in which ignorance and guilt concur, is, we are convinced, very frequently the real bond. The indolence and recklessness and indifference to duty which have led a man at last within the walls of a prison kept him in youth outside the school-room, or prevented his profiting by opportunities of learning. The evidence of Captain George Hall, the governor of Parkhurst Prison, before the House of Lords, presents a striking corroboration of this opinion. He says that

“The great majority of boys sent there are uneducated; the proportion who could read and write with tolerable readiness would be but small; and the proportion of those who have any real understand-

* Reformatory Schools, pp. 18, 19.

† Educational Census, p. 32.

‡ *Plint*, p. 184.

ing of what they read is very small indeed. Yet it is a remarkable fact, that of between 1100 and 1200 boys who have been received into Parkhurst from 1838 to 1847, there have been only 36 who have never been to school at all. But though the very large majority, 96 or 97 per cent, have been at school, they have learned little or nothing; they were truants: there are here truants from schools in all parts of the country. Many have been at the National Schools; many at private, or Lancastrian schools.*

In the same prison, in 1844, out of a total of 937 boys, only 30 had never been at school; 732 had been at day-schools longer than one year, having had on the average each three years and ten months schooling.

Some will say, this only shows the worthlessness of the schools which could turn out such hopeful pupils. We believe it to be as unfair, however, to lay the blame of the boys' ignorance upon their teachers as it would be to censure the legislators of the country for their lawlessness,—more so, perhaps. The disposition is the same which sets at defiance both the schoolmaster and the legislator. The fact of education having been received shows, in most cases, that the dispositions were there beforehand which it professes to have imparted. The fact of its not having been received, where the opportunity was copiously presented, witnesses frequently to the pre-existence of those evil qualities, the gradual growth of which is attributed to lack of knowledge. We do not undervalue the importance of education, even though it be confined to the merest rudiments; it is, in these days, an indispensable instrument of social advancement. Mental cultivation, moreover, is a good in itself. But we are convinced that, as a moral discipline, as a preventive of crime, its effects are, to say the least, much exaggerated. Mr. Smith, the governor of Edinburgh Gaol, speaking of the year ending 30th September 1846, says, "that the number of *recommitments* of those who can read well is much greater than the number of those who cannot read at all."† A teacher in a London ragged school, whose diary is quoted by Miss Carpenter, expresses himself to the same purport. "It is," he says, "apparently worse than useless to expect a man to be made better by merely learning to read and write. Those of our scholars who can do so best are decidedly the most depraved."‡

But want of education, it is often urged, is a cause of poverty; and from poverty a large portion of crime springs. There is a minimum of truth in this. Persons who can live in affluence do not ordinarily steal. There are few amateur thieves, we presume. But if it be meant that the majority of offenders are driven into

* Reformatory Schools, p. 28.

† Ibid. p. 27.

‡ Ibid. p. 152.

wrong-doing by sheer destitution, the statement is quite false. Of "the utterly destitute and unsheltered, the friendless and the fatherless," Mr. Clay says, that "it is very rarely they appear in the felon's dock."* "There are a large number of boys," says Miss Carpenter, "in our large cities who merely fall into the practice [of thieving] from sheer idleness, or from that love of enterprise so natural to boys, and often lauded in the children of gentlemen;—a few, *but comparatively few*, are driven to the practice by sheer destitution."† Of course a time will come when it will be a necessity for such boys either to steal or starve. They will, by patient continuance in wrong-doing, have precluded themselves from possibility of honest employment. But crime is not, in this case, the product of destitution, but destitution of the means of honest livelihood is the result of crime. Mr. Hill enumerates, as the three principal causes of delinquency—(1.) Bad training and ignorance; (2.) Drunkenness and other kinds of profligacy; (3.) Poverty.‡ "A great majority of offences," he says, "are committed by members of the poorest class; though it should be remarked, that this class is at the same time the most ignorant and the most intemperate." But is it not obvious that drunkenness and profligacy are in no other way original causes of crime than as they are sins? They are themselves but the first effects of the criminal dispositions which lead men, at last, to violate the rights of others and of society. The poverty of the ill-disposed classes is, Mr. Hill admits, generally accompanied by ignorance and drunkenness, which sufficiently account for it. Sentiment misleads many benevolent people on this matter. They visit the squalid abodes of our dangerous classes, and see them scheming future, and practising present, wickedness. They are struck with the filth, the noise, the details abhorrent to every sense and feeling. And they are led to consider the moral degradation they witness as the natural, if not the inevitable, effect of debasing outward circumstances. We do not deny, nor profess to be able to measure, their evil influence. But physical wretchedness is not a first cause; it has had a beginning, is an effect of something antecedent; and that something is, in nine cases out of ten, the very immorality for which it is made accountable. Comparatively few of the working classes who find their way into prison, says Mr. Hill, are skilled or well-paid labourers. The reason of this, though he overlooks it, is

* Reformatory Schools, p. 66.

† Ibid. p. 71.

‡ He mentions also, (4.) Habits of violating the laws, engendered by the creation of artificial offences; (5.) Other measures of legislation interfering unnecessarily in private actions, or presenting examples of injustice; (6.) Temptation to crime, caused by the probability either of entire escape or of subjection to an insufficient punishment (p. 34). But these causes are now little operative.

clear. To have mastered a difficult mechanical art is a proof of the pre-existence of qualities which are likely to keep a man out of gaol. Mr. Hill takes the sign and example of respectability for its cause.

But it cannot be denied, it will be said, that in times of scarcity, of dear food and slack employment, our prisons are invariably most crowded. Mr. Plint has an elaborate comparative table, exhibiting the price of wheat and the number of criminals, year by year, from 1805 to 1840. It certainly establishes a close connection between the two. In the paper of Professor Walsh, to which we have before referred, the years marked by increase of crime from 1844 to 1854 are shown to have been years of distress. But these results are not out of harmony with the opinions we have stated. There is always a class standing intermediate between the honest operative and the professional thief, uniting to some extent the avocations of both, which is the first to feel the pressure of scarcity. Its effect is to push them down into the rank of habitual criminals, to add to the number and extent of their depredations, and thereby of all depredations. Hard times do not generally make the hitherto honest vicious, but only the half-honest more vicious.

We have now endeavoured to show that, though increasing population, the aggregation of men into large masses within a small area, is a condition of things favourable to crime, yet the manufacturing system is not itself a demoralising agency, and that ignorance, and poverty, and drunkenness, are more frequently effects than causes of vice. The question remains, by whom the great bulk of offences in England is perpetrated? Mainly by professional malefactors, and the outcast and indolent portion of the working-classes. What is the time of life at which crime is most prevalent? Mr. Neison, in an article in the *Statistical Magazine*, October 1846, computes the number of offences perpetrated by persons between 15 and 30 to be 64 per cent of the whole. These 15 years are therefore by far the most guilty in man's life. In the year 1851 we find, from the census, that the number of persons committed in Great Britain was 31,961; of whom 6883, or nearly 25 per cent, were under 20 years of age. The whole population of Great Britain at the same date was 21,185,010, and the number of persons under 20 years of age 9,958,114, or nearly 50 per cent of all the inhabitants. By far the greater proportion of delinquents under 20 years of age are between 15 and 20. In 1846 those under 15 formed 6·5 per cent of the criminal population; those above 15 and below 20, 24·5 per cent. Mr. Plint estimates that in 1848 the percentage of persons in all England under 20 was 45·8, and the proportion of criminals 1 in 971; adults of 20 and under 25 years of age,

9·7 per cent, the proportion of criminals being 1 in 262; persons 25 and under 30 years of age, 8 per cent, proportion of criminals 1 in 363; adults 30 and upwards, 36·5 per cent of the population, proportion of criminals, 1 in 753. The ratio of criminals to population, without distinction of age, in all England, was 1 in 641. Thus, of the 15 years of human life between 15 and 30, the greatest number of crimes is perpetrated during the first quinquenniad, the least during the last. Considering the length of time during which a delinquent may escape detection, and the large proportion which reconvictions form of all convictions, it is probable that of the adult offenders a large number were once juvenile offenders—that they did not first fall into sin in manhood. Hence it is of supreme importance to discover the general origin of juvenile offences—the circumstances under which they are ordinarily engendered. “Mr. Clay,” said Lord Stanley, in his recent speech at Bristol, “found that in 75 per cent of the cases investigated by him, the fault of the children lay unmistakably at the door of the parents. In 57 per cent of these cases there had been habitual drunkenness, often accompanied by brutality, on the part of the father; in the remaining 18 per cent habitual indifference and neglect,—that is to say, in three cases out of every four of juvenile delinquency which came before him, the prisoner had had hardly a chance of becoming any thing but what he was. Mr. Clay’s calculation is corroborated by another which we extract from an able and useful pamphlet by Mr. Adshhead. He states that, from an inquiry made into the cases of 100 criminal children at Manchester, in 1840, the following results were elicited:

Born of dishonest parents	60
Parents profligate, but not of the criminal class	30
Parents honest and industrious	10”*

Thus at least 10 per cent of juvenile crime is in spite of good home-influence. Allowing that out of the 90 per cent who have dishonest or profligate parents, the same proportion (10 per cent) would have turned out ill under happier circumstances, we find 19 per cent to be the amount of youthful delinquency which cannot be fairly attributed to evil training. This shows that, while direct dealing with the young will do much, it will not do all. The best reformatory is of little avail compared with a good home. Where the latter has failed, the former cannot be expected to succeed. Without taking into account those who first transgress the laws as men, the most sanguine must always reckon upon having criminals enough to prevent the problem of the

* *Times*, August 21, 1856.

treatment of criminals ever growing obsolete, though industrial schools should receive all the *young* delinquents in the land. On this problem we must now say a very few words. Before we can decide *how* we shall punish, it is, or might seem to be, needful to determine the *aim* we ought to have in punishing.

Is that aim the reformation of the offender? or the prevention of crime? or the satisfaction of justice? Or are all these objects compatible, nay more, inseparable—*tria juncta in uno*? If they can be attained only in different degrees, according as one or the other of them is made paramount, which of them should have precedence? To these questions there are as many answers as there are possibilities of answer. The controversy they suggest is at least as old as the time of Plato and Aristotle, in whom we so often find our modern difficulties anticipated, if not resolved. The former insists upon amendment and example alone: "The wise man punishes not because wrong has been done, but in order that wrong may not be done." The latter recognises example also, substituting for amendment retribution, or, as he calls it, synallactic justice. Modern sympathies are on this point (though, for the most part, of course, with profound unconsciousness of their great ally) on the side of Plato. If punishments exert the utmost preventive effect on those who witness or are otherwise cognisant of them, and the maximum of reformatory influence on the criminal, what more, it is asked, can be desired? But the results, it should be remembered, which it is the completest success to have gained, are not always those at which we should deliberately aim, or which *can* be gained by so aiming. God has not made the conduct of human life, where the greatest interests are involved, dependent on nice calculations, and the adaptation of means to ends. In practice every one allows this. Health, and strength, and refreshment, are the bodily conditions which nutriment, and exercise, and repose, are designed to promote. But the *motive* to take food is hunger; to take rest, weariness. The valetudinarian, who keeps the ends we speak of in view, whose walks are "constitutionals," whose diet is a regimen, is surest to miss them. The urgency of appetite, the sense of repletion, are better monitors than the most artfully framed rules. God gives us instincts to guide us, and reason to correct the aberrations, or to moderate the excesses of those instincts, but not to usurp their place. The motive of punishment is the vindication of right, the infliction of "an evil of suffering" for "an evil of doing." The end is the removal, so far as may be, of occasions for future penalties. Men were not left to think out the philosophy of the matter before they could give the malefactor his due. Their sense of justice gave them true guidance, and secured advantages

on which they did not speculate. In proportion as justice is done, as the penalty is made in kind and degree correspondent to the crime, is amendment likely to follow, and prevention of similar offences to be secured. If, however, reformation is exclusively aimed at, we believe it will ordinarily fail. If prevention is kept constantly in view, it will rarely be effected. It is impossible to compute the forces of human nature, more especially of *criminal* human nature, so as to predict the result when a new external force is applied, whether in the shape of a gaol chaplain or instructor, a treadmill, a solitary cell, or a public execution. It is not by experiment and induction, but by deeply-seated moral instincts, that the principle and scale of punishments should be determined. Details only are to be decided by considerations of supposed expediency. Merely deterring influences, moreover, most successfully contrived, would fall short of what punishment should accomplish, and would be likely to accomplish by a single eye to equitable retribution. To create a virtuous society is more than simply to keep men from breaking the laws. By frightening them enough you may do the latter. But fear is not a moral principle. Penalties should be of such a character as, roughly at least, to mirror the degree of guilt implied in the offences for which they are awarded, and, if possible, the *kind* of guilt also. The recognition not only of equality, but of a palpable analogy between the two, would help to bring out clearly the nature of the former, to impress its real character and enormity alike upon the sufferer and the public. Retribution in kind is the spontaneous dictate of social justice. Discrimination, too, well marked between shades of guilt, is the surest safeguard against the tendency of lesser delinquencies to prepare the way for greater. And as to know one's evil is the condition of turning from it, as repentance must come before reformation, we believe that retribution, which is a paying back,—if possible in the same coin,—would have an improving influence on the malefactor himself, as well as on those who are tending to his position.

These views, however, are in little favour at the present day. It is a growing habit to look upon the convict, not as a culpable person at all, but simply as an unfortunate one, who, so far from having any atonement to make for his past career, is rather in a position to require that atonement be made to him. If, as Lord Stanley seemed to imply in his Bristol speech, "circumstances" and "organisation" are the sole causes of crime, there is an end of all punishment, properly so called. The man did not create his own "circumstances;" or, if he did, he was but the instrument of other "circumstances" in so doing. As little is he the author of his own "organisation." Language involving the same

doctrine was employed by Lord Brougham in his paper "On the Inefficiency of simply Penal Legislation." "The gaol," said his lordship, "must be considered as a moral hospital, and its inmates treated rather as patients than as criminals." The most hardened ruffians are but "uncured patients;" those whom common language harshly calls incorrigible scoundrels are simply confirmed invalids. We must not blame them, or do any thing but pity them, and carefully tend them in their affliction. We do not reproach a man for falling into a fever or a decline, or desert him when his case grows hopeless. To hang them would be as barbarous and inhuman as to smother a man labouring under hydrophobia, or to shoot down a leper. If these consequences are not allowed by the able and eminent persons we have named, it is only because their practical good sense vitiates their logic. Their use of medical language is a great abuse, justified only by a few flimsy and superficial analogies between crime and physical malady. Both are abnormal states. Both are contagious. Here the resemblance ceases. Bodily infection is independent of the will. In order to moral corruption, the will must consent to evil. It is not in a man's choice whether he will succumb to the cholera or to the plague. It is in his power to refrain from committing a murder, or breaking into a house. He can, if he likes, resist temptation. If the view of crime we are combating gains ground, the result will, we believe, be most baneful. It is impossible that your estimate of a man should not imprint itself on your demeanour to him, and speedily become legible to himself. If you regard him as the victim of an untoward lot, he will soon see that you so regard him, and will either despise and practise upon your weakness, or come gradually to form the same opinion of himself. This will infallibly prevent genuine amendment, to which, as we have said, contrition is essential. But how can he repent what he could by no means avoid? how could he help his "organisation?" Good minds, working a system founded on moral views so erroneous, may effect much good; but it is in its despite, and not by it. Happily, they *cannot* be true to it. And an inconsistent burst of indignation, or a gravity of rebuke, will at times break in with salutary effect upon the even tenor of their benignant laxity. Of course there is a mixture of truth in the errors (as we deem them) of this school, or they could never gain credence. It was the mistake of a previous generation to make no allowance for training and external agencies of corruption. But the reaction has been excessive. It is, in its way, however, an unconscious tribute to the principle of satisfaction to justice. Society feels that it is not without a share in the criminal's guilt, and would atone by making his punishment restorative.

It would be very wrong to identify all the partisans of the amendment doctrine with the opinions just described. There are others, religious philanthropists, who plead for a reformatory discipline, not because they disbelieve, but because they intensely believe, in responsibility. The criminal is, to them, not a patient to be cured, but a soul to be saved. Their exertions, however, are directed not so much to remodel prison-rules as to supplement their deficiencies. When they confine themselves to this, they deserve only praise and imitation. Rigid justice from the state, compassion and kindly aid from private benevolence, is a combination most unexceptionable and most hopeful. But when those in authority forget that "to do justly" has precedence in the divine command over the obligation "to love mercy,"—nay, is the essential condition of real mercy,—only evil can follow, as the woeful results of Captain Maconochie's well-meant experiments in Norfolk Island bear startling testimony.

The class of offenders from whom it is most difficult to exact satisfaction to justice—in reference to whom it seems almost a mockery to utter so imposing a phrase—are juvenile delinquents. It is only in a very modified degree that we can ascribe to many among them a guilty intention. But it is going too far to say even of those whose ignorance is densest, whose surroundings have most completely shut out good influences, that in doing wrong they are wholly unaware of the wrong they are doing. Almost all of them have at least some obscure and fitful feeling, which, in their young and impressible minds, only requires clearing and developing to become abhorrence of crime. That this feeling may not die away, it must be seen to be shared by those teachers and others with whom they are brought into contact. Of course we are not arguing for the assumption of a tone towards them which shall make them think they are monsters of iniquity, but only for such an admixture of discipline with prevailing kindness, of reproof with encouragement, as shall echo upon them from without, more distinctly, the faint whisper of condemnation which they hear within their own minds. Guilt *expects* retribution; it will persuade itself that it is not guilt if it does not meet with it. Hence, we think, a short term of imprisonment should almost invariably precede admission into reformatory schools. This, it is objected, imprints a stigma upon the youthful convict. It imprints a stigma upon his past life; and that, for his own sake, is what is needed. It recognises as a fact, what it is affectation to seem politely ignorant of,—the lad's previous criminality. The arguments against imprisonment in the case of the young have weight only when he steps from the gaol directly into the world again, and not when

there is interposed between the two a term of industrial training, extending over years, in a reformatory.

But, as we have already seen, juvenile delinquency, in the great majority of instances, must be attributed mainly to the sins of the parents. They, then, are the parties on whom punishment should fall most heavily. That others should maintain their offspring gratuitously is no punishment to them. It has, therefore, (by the act of 1854, amended in 1855) been made incumbent on them to defray a large proportion of the expenses incurred during the detention of their children. We do not see why the whole of the expenses, which would certainly not exceed the cost of the child's maintenance and education in freedom, should not, except good grounds of exemption can be shown, be exacted from them, under such penalties as may be fitted to enforce the demand. The justice of the existing measure, so far as it goes, cannot be denied. Its good effects, preventive and reformatory, have been proved. Even the involuntary discharge of neglected duties, the compulsory acknowledgment of human ties, has a tendency, paradox though it seems, to beget the affection whence those acts of duty ought spontaneously to have flowed. This is but the converse, the brighter side, of the profound truth, now become a hackneyed truism, which Tacitus expresses: *Proprium humani ingenii est, odisse quem læseris*. Mr. Dunne, the chief constable of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in a letter read in August at Bristol, before the Reformatory Union, notices the decrease of crime following on the establishment of reformatory schools in his town, and proceeds: "I have more particularly found that greater advantages emanated from those institutions, since the parents of the children confined in them have been made to pay contributions for their maintenance; for it appears beyond doubt, that the effect of the latter has been to induce the parents of other young criminals to withdraw them from the streets; and, instead of using them for purposes of crime, they seem to take an interest in their welfare; and I know that many of them are now really anxious to get such employment for their children as will enable them to obtain an honest livelihood; and it is my opinion that the example thus set to older and more desperate criminals, belonging, in many instances, to the same family as the juvenile thief, has had the effect of reforming them also, for many of them have left off their course of crime, and are now living by honest labour."

Even though these morally beneficial effects could not be discerned, society would have a right to demand that those who have lived upon it by pilfering shall not live on it while they are being trained to abstain from pilfering. And this opens a large

question as to secondary punishments generally. The expenses for the maintenance of prisoners in England and Wales were, in 1853, 450,416*l.*, the number of prisoners being 109,083. In 1852, though the number of prisoners was *greater* by 5,645, the expenses were *less* by 15,254*l.** In 1853, the average total cost per head per annum was 26*l.* 19*s.* 8½*d.* The average earnings of each prisoner per annum were 2*l.* 1*s.* 5*d.*† On our present system, which is to substitute the separate confinement (partially or thoroughly carried out) of convicts for their aggregation in a mass or distribution in classes, the cost of their maintenance must yearly be larger, whatever reduction may take place in their numbers. The change, in spite of its immediate pecuniary disadvantages, is no doubt a change for the better. The old system, still subsisting in considerably more than a third of the gaols of England and Wales, and Ireland,‡ is not only unreformatory, but hideously demoralising. As it is no part of a man's punishment to send him into the world again more desperate and depraved than when he was taken from it, and therefore a greater danger to society; and as comparatively beneficial effects do flow from the new system, there is no doubt that we cannot revert to the old, whatever its apparent economical superiority. But is there no alternative? If it is equitable that parents should support their children while under legal sentence, it seems at least as equitable that the adult criminal should support himself. Under present arrangements, however, even in gaols adapted for industrial employments, he is far from doing so. The earnings of the prisoners during their term of separation, and during the period of associated labour which follows it, are too small to make any but the most trivial deduction from the cost incurred on their behalf. At Pentonville, in 1855, the total earnings of the convicts were 3,699*l.* The value of their *productive* labour was 916*l.* The total expenditure was 15,295*l.* Subtracting the value of the productive labour, the net expenditure is seen to be 14,379*l.*§ Now, if the first principle of retribution is restitution, if this is the very beginning and element of it, we obviously have but an imperfect retribution here. That the prisoner should repay the outlay on him during his confinement, that he should not be released, whatever his offence, till he has done this,—in many cases, of course, not even then,—is a plain dictate of justice. When theft is the crime for which he is incarcerated, the value of the property

* Nineteenth Report of the Inspectors of Prisons, p. 9.

† Ibid. pp. 246-7.

‡ See Returns on Separate Confinement, obtained last session by Lord Robert Cecil.

§ Reports of the Directors of Prisons for 1855, p. 9.

stolen, or some proportion of it, ought to be added.* We are speaking now of what abstract right requires. To carry out its requisitions would necessitate a reconstruction of our present system, and an organisation of something like the "industrial regiments" which Mr. Carlyle recommends. We are glad to find the spirit of that distinguished writer's suggestion adopted in a quarter where his general views of the proper treatment of crime are not likely to meet with welcome. Mr. Frederic Hill says :

"There should be both agricultural and manufacturing prisons ; and the manufacturing prisons should be constructed some for one kind of work and some for another. Thus there should be a prison where the chief employment is weaving, another, where it is shoemaking, another for blacksmiths and other workers in iron, and a mill for spinners."† "By an arrangement for removing a body of prisoners from place to place, large quantities of waste land might be brought into cultivation."‡

The objection, that such employment of prisoners would interfere with free labour, is hardly worth noticing. It is better that 100,000 men, and more, should support themselves, than be lodged and fed out of taxes levied from honest industry. They would not affect the labour-market to the same extent as if they were competing for employment out of prison, and multiplying the population. But would they work? The question has been practically answered. By the system of piece-work, and allowing the men to do overwork, on which a value was placed, to go in diminution of their term of sentence, or to furnish a fund for their support for a short time after their release, and in part to purchase small indulgences and alleviations of their condition, the most remarkable results were obtained in Bermuda, Australia, and elsewhere. The nature of the convicts seemed transformed ; they laboured cheerfully and well.§ There is nothing in the latitude of England which should prevent similar effects from similar causes here. Indeed, they have been, to a considerable extent, obtained at Portland Prison.||

We have advocated the measures indicated above, because they seem to meet a part of the moral requirements of punishment, to satisfy a fraction of the claims of justice, with an exactitude which is in no other way possible. In other respects we must be content with an approximation to the demerits of each convict, having no accurate or infallible criterion. But whatever penalties be

* See Hill on Crime, pp. 218-9.

† Crime, p. 294.

‡ Ibid. p. 211.

§ See the testimony of Sir W. Denison, Captain Nelson, and others, quoted in the *Edinburgh Review*, July 1849, pp. 20, 21.

|| In 1855 the value of labour there was 40,120*l*. The expenses amounted to 57,239*l*. Reports of the Directors of Convict Prisons, p. 110.

inflicted, it is absolutely just that, while he is under sentence, he should work for his maintenance. And here again, we think, it may be shown that strict retribution best attains the other ends of punishment, deterrent example and amendment. Few persons, who can be influenced by considerations of the future at all, would not prefer labour in freedom, with absolute right to all its proceeds, to the certainty sooner or later of protracted labour in bondage, and without remuneration, under hardships and privations so great, that overwork is absolutely coveted as a favour, in order that by it a few scanty comforts and indulgences may be acquired. The indolence, which is so prolific a parent of crime, is most likely to be scared by such a prospect as this. That cheerful and strenuous labour, shown to be possible even under the conditions which have been laid down, would exert a most healthy moral influence, can hardly be doubted. It is most significant that *reformatory* schools, to secure their end of reformation, have been necessitated to become *industrial* schools also. The principle is the same whether juvenile or adult offenders are concerned. In the case of the latter, to say nothing of the good habits which regular toil would be likely to form, the feeling that they were, though under such humiliation, supporting themselves and paying a debt, would be likely to give them, in some feeble degree, the unwonted sensation of self-respect, which is necessary to all real moral restoration. The virtue engendered in separate confinement is likely to be of a morbid and artificial character,—a plant of hot-house growth, less able than that formed under more bracing conditions to stand exposure to the outer elements. We prefer, however, to rest on the obvious justice of some such arrangement as that proposed. However largely we may diminish, by various means, the number of criminals in England, there must always be many of them in so densely-populated a country. It is time to make provisions *en permanence* for turning them to the best account. Unless we are to have recourse to the formation of new penal colonies,—which we will not suppose,—we must keep them within our borders. This, we believe, can be safely done, if some such plans as those which have been suggested are set in vigorous operation. Questions of detail we cannot now touch upon. Before we conclude, however, we must devote a very few words to the subject of capital punishments.

If retribution is just,—they, inflicted as they now are only for murder, are just. We will not apologise to our readers for making no account of the declamation about the sanctity of human life, of which the advocates of their abolition are so fond. Human life *is* sacred,—and so is human *liberty*. But as we do not scruple to lock up a person who abuses the one, so neither need we scruple to dismiss from the world him who has made

the foulest abuse of the powers of the other. He who has set at naught *all* human bonds, is best committed at once to the hands of God. Man can no longer deal with him. But we must confess that the satisfaction of justice, in this instance, does not appear to be accompanied by the effects which, in every other instance, seem to attend it. Of the reformation of the offender, we will say only this, that it seems to us to show a false philosophy, a superficial acquaintance with human nature, *altogether* and *always* to distrust the apparent penitence evinced by the culprit during the time which elapses between the sentence of death and its execution. Minds sunk to the lowest pitch of degradation can often only be reached by some such powerful shock as the anticipation of a speedy and violent death is calculated to produce. There are many instances of reformation, or conversion, call it which you will, effected by a sudden and appalling peril, when all other agencies had failed,—reformation proved by the after-life to be genuine. Why should it not be so in cases where his impending execution is presented to the thoughts of the guilty? It may often succeed,—there are strong grounds of analogy, as well as of positive evidence, for believing it does often succeed,—where nothing less could. It snaps all at once the ties which connect a man with the scenes and relationships of his past career, which are the strongest fetters of sin, convulses the soul, and directs its gaze to the future; creating, it may be, a susceptibility of more solemn hopes and fears than he has yet known.

We cannot dwell on these considerations; we can only summarily suggest them. But, it is said, the punishment of death does not prevent murder by others. Of all violent crimes, it alone is capital; and it alone is steadily increasing in England. But may not causes not essential to the punishment produce this effect? The foul exhibition of the culprit's death-struggles has a depraving tendency, which would be removed by making executions private, in conformity with the recent recommendation of a Committee of the House of Lords. The uncertainty of the punishment, owing to the capricious manner in which the royal prerogative of commuting the sentence is exercised by those who wield the Queen's authority, must have a pernicious influence. The unwillingness of juries to convict, where a life is at stake, is another prejudicial circumstance. This shows, it will be said, that the punishment is out of harmony with popular sentiments, and such punishments should be abolished. But it is a dangerous policy for a government to lower the standard of right to the laxity of the age. Rather ought it to elevate the popular morality to the true standard of right, by persistence in it. And it should be regarded, surely, as a more awful thing to affix the

stigma of murder upon a man than to deprive him of the existence which becomes a curse under such an imputation. Whom you dare not put to death for any crime,—admitting that death is its proper penalty,—you ought as little to dare to pronounce guilty of that crime. It is impossible to give back a life which has been wrongly sacrificed. It is equally impossible to give back the years which have been spent in unjust imprisonment, to revive the hopes which have been blighted, to open out again the career that has been closed, or restore the energetic spirit which alone can pursue it. These considerations are, we think, of some weight in counterbalancing the strong arguments that may be urged on the other side: we will not say, we do not feel prepared to say, of how much weight. In this, as in all other matters relating to punishment, or indeed aught else, our effort must be to discover what right demands, and then to do it unwaveringly. Our concern is not, except in a secondary degree, with consequences. They are ordered by a higher Power. But we may learn from them; for when they go wrong, it is a sign that we have erred. *Fiat justitia, ruat cælum*,—"Let justice be done, though the sky should fall,"—represents the true spirit of human conduct. But to do justice is the best way to prevent the falling of the sky.

ART. III.—VICTOR COUSIN ON MADAME DE HAUTEFORT
AND HER CONTEMPORARIES.

Madame de Longueville. Etudes sur les Femmes illustres et la Société du XVII^e Siècle. Par M. Victor Cousin. Troisième édition. 8vo. Paris, 1855.

Madame de Sablé. Par M. Victor Cousin. 8vo. Paris, 1854.

Madame de Hautefort et Madame de Chevreuse. Par M. Victor Cousin. 2 tom. 8vo. Paris, 1856.

THERE is nothing comparable for moral force to the charm of truly noble manners. The mind is, in comparison, only slightly and transiently impressed by heroic actions, for these are felt to be but uncertain signs of a heroic soul; nothing less than a series of them, more sustained and varied than circumstances are ever found to demand, could assure us, with the infallible certainty required for the highest power of example, that they were the faithful reflex of the ordinary spirit of the actor. The spectacle

of patient suffering, though not so striking, is more morally impressive; for we know that

“Action is transitory—a step, a blow,
The motion of a muscle, this way or that—
'Tis done; and, in the after vacancy,
We wonder at ourselves like men betray'd:
Suffering is permanent, obscure, and dark,
And has the nature of infinity.”

The mind, however, has a very natural repugnance to the sustained contemplation of this species of example, and is much more willingly persuaded by a spectacle precisely the reverse—namely, that of goodness actually upon the earth triumphant, and bearing in its ordinary demeanour, under whatever circumstances, the lovely stamp of obedience to that highest and most rarely-fulfilled commandment, “Rejoice evermore.” Unlike action or suffering, such obedience is not so much the way to heaven, as a picture, say rather a part, of heaven itself; and truly beautiful manners will be found upon inspection to involve a continual and visible compliance with that apostolical injunction. A right obedience of this kind must be the crown and completion of all lower kinds of obedience. It is not compatible with the bitter humiliations of the habit of any actual sin; it excludes selfishness, since the condition of joy, as distinguished from pleasure, is generosity, and a soul in the practice of going forth from itself; it is no sensual partiality for the “bright side” of things, no unholy repugnance to the consideration of sorrow; but a habit of lifting life to a height at which all sides of it become bright, and all moral difficulties intelligible: in action it is a salubrity about which doctors will not disagree; in the countenance it is a loveliness about which connoisseurs will not dispute; in the demeanour it is a lofty gentleness, which, without pride, patronises all the world, and which, without omitting the minutest temporal obligations or amenities, does every thing with an air of immortality. When Providence sets its inheritors upon a hill where they cannot be hid, acknowledging, as it were, their deserts by conferring upon them conspicuous fortune and corporeal advantages, and proving them by various and splendid opportunities, the result is an example to which, as we have said, there is nothing else to be compared in the way of moral agency; a spectacle so clear in the demonstration of human majesty and loveliness, that the honouring of it with love and imitation is the only point of worship upon which persons of all countries, faiths, customs, and morals, are in perfectly catholic agreement. For the benefit of a single such example it were scarcely possible that the world could pay too dearly. Monarchy and aristocracy have nothing to fear from the arguments of their opponents so long as democracies have

failed to produce a Sidney or a Bayard, a Lady Rachel Russell or a Madame de Hautefort.

It is far from our intention to imply that the loveliest blossoms of humanity appear, like the flowers of the aloe, at centenary intervals, and then only in kings' gardens. We are not allowed to doubt but that the poor and suffering most often are what "the rich should be, right-minded;" and that they therefore, more frequently than the rich, have the foundation of right manners. Nevertheless, spiritual loveliness when found in conspicuous places, and "clothed upon" with extraordinary personal and intellectual gifts, while it is more impressive than humble worth in the sight even of the best, as being exposed to subtler temptations to deny itself, is made visible to many who would refuse to acknowledge the same lustre were it shining in a dark place, and is more imposing to all, not only because all are naturally delighted with the extraordinary occurrence of harmony between the apparently hostile realms of grace and nature, fortune and desert, but also because such harmony explains, exalts, and really completes its seemingly-opposed elements, and grace, expressing itself with thorough culture and knowledge of the world, becomes natural, and nature, instructed in its true perfection, gracious. Moreover, fine manners are always more or less an art, and this art is one which the poor and socially obscure have no means of bringing to perfection: their lives may be purified in the furnace of affliction, and worked by the blows of circumstance into the finest temper; faith and resignation may give evenness, and love a certain lustre to their demeanour; but the last touch, which is that which polishes the mirror, and tells more in the eyes of the world than all the rest, is the work of art. And, let it be acknowledged, none of the fine arts is so fine as that of manners, and, of all, it is probably the only one which is cultivated in the next world as well as in this, where also it is, like its sisters, immortal; for the contagion of fine manners is irresistible, and wherever the possessor of them moves, he leaves behind him lovers and imitators who indefinitely, if not infinitely, propagate his likeness. Unlike the lower arts of poetry, music, architecture, and painting, which may be regarded as secondary and derivative from this primary art of good manners, which imitates nothing but God; unlike these arts, in which men have always been the most excellent professors, that of fine manners has been carried to its highest perfection by women. Than some of these, in whom station, beauty, wit, and holiness, have been united, it seems scarcely possible that the angels themselves should shine with a more bright and amiable lustre.

Women, not to speak of their beauty, their docile and self-adaptive natures, and that inherent aptitude for goodness which

makes devotion their chief intemperance, enjoy, in their privilege of subordination to men a vast advantage for the development of the noblest manners. Obedience is the proper perfection of humanity; fine manners are the expression of that perfection; and that obedience and consequent perfection are likely to be frequent and complete in proportion as the object to which submission is directly due is near and comprehensible. Remote and incomprehensible Deity is the "head of the man;" and his obedience to that vast and invisible authority, though of a loftier nature, is necessarily incomplete in its character and indistinct in its expression, when compared with the submission of the woman to the image of the same authority in himself. While the one obeys from faith, the other does so from sight; and the sensible "*beauty* of holiness" is therefore almost exclusively the prerogative of the woman. The light of her duty strikes directly upon that to which it is relative, and is reflected back in loveliness upon herself; while his appears to be lost in the space it has to traverse to its object. Here is a great spiritual distinction of sex, which those who reject the doctrine of subordination confound and destroy; pulling down the majesty of man by abolishing his principal responsibility, and turning the peculiar strength and glory of the woman into weakness and disgrace.

There was one place and time singular in the history of the world for the development of the woman's character to the extreme limit of her capacities in various directions. The court of France in the reign of Louis XIII., the regency of Anne of Austria, and the early part of the reign of Louis XIV., produced a company of ladies, in whose presence all the remaining tract of history looks dim. The wars of the League had left the great nobles of France in the enjoyment of an amount of personal freedom, importance, and dignity, greater than was ever, before or since, the lot of any aristocracy. Chivalrous traditions; the custom of appeal to arms for the settlement of personal quarrels, a custom which is said to have cost the country some nine hundred of its best gentlemen in about as many years; the worship of womanhood carried to a pharisaical strictness of observance, were conditions which, though socially disastrous in various ways, exalted the individual "*valeur*" of men to the most imposing height, and rendered a corresponding exaltation imperative upon the women, in order to secure that personal predominance which it is their instinct to seek. The political state of France was one which afforded the members of its court extraordinary occasions for the display of character. That state was one of a vast transition. Feudal privileges had to be either moderated, defined and constitutionalised, or else destroyed. The revolution which was about to operate in England and to end in liberty, was already

working in France with a manifestly opposite destiny. Richelieu and Mazarin were slowly and surely bringing about an absolute despotism, as the only solution of the political difficulties of the state consistent with its greatness, and, probably, even with its unity. The opposition of the nobles to the diminution of their power was carried on with far greater boldness and grandeur of personal effect, inasmuch as it was done without directly affronting the monarchical authority in the persons of its weak representations, Louis XIII. and Anne of Austria. The two great ministers were the objects against which the whole wrath of the nobility was directed. Hence the war against encroaching monarchy was in great part waged in the court itself; and the king and the queen-regent were themselves found from time to time in the ranks of the indignant aristocracy. Here, then, was a wonderful field for individual effect; and that field was open to women no less, or even more, than to men: for the struggle, indeed, on the part of the latter was, upon the whole, a selfish and ignoble one; no national idea inspired it; every one was for himself and his house; and the women were perfectly able to sympathise and assist in quarrels of this personal and intelligible interest. Richelieu and Mazarin were moreover exactly the kind of enemies to excite the peculiar hostility, and prove the peculiar talents of women. In their modes of thought and action, these ministers were too much like women not to be naturally obnoxious to their hatred. In these days, too, rose Port-Royal, with its female reformers, saints, and theologians, offering an asylum to weary and repentant worldliness and passion, or a fresh field for vanity which had exhausted its ordinary irritants. On every side lay great temptations and great opportunities; and the women of the period seem to have been endowed with singular qualifications for the illustration of both.

M. Victor Cousin has presented us with three excellent portraits of women of this time—Madame de Chevreuse, Mademoiselle de Hautefort, and Madame de Longueville; the volume professing to be an account of Madame de Sablé, being in fact a continuation of the *Jeunesse* of Madame de Longueville. Madame de Sablé herself was, to our minds, the most insipid of heroines, and we are quite at a loss to account for the enthusiasm professed for her by M. Cousin, from whom, indeed, we very widely differ as to the relative degrees of admiration in which the several ladies he portrays ought to be held. We are astonished by the genius of Madame de Chevreuse for political intrigue, and admire the animal courage displayed by her in her merited misfortunes; we see nothing particularly charming in the youth of Madame de Longueville, or admirable in the medley of passion and vanity which made her the heroine of the Fronde,

though we sincerely pity her sufferings from the cowardly conduct of La Rochefoucauld towards her, and are very glad to find that in the end she grows heartily sorry for her misdoings; for Madame de Sablé, we repeat that we care as little as we possibly can for an inoffensive lady; but for Mademoiselle de Hautefort we profess an admiration which knows no bounds, and which we shall endeavour to instil into our readers. We cannot preface a sketch of this noble lady's character and career more effectually than by a glance at those of the Duchesses de Longueville and de Chevreuse.

Madame de Chevreuse was a zealous politician, without for a moment ceasing to be a woman. Her motive was always love, "ou plutôt," as M. Cousin, with a kind of discrimination unusual in a Frenchman, says, "*la galanterie*." Had she been able so far to deny her sex as to entertain a national object, or even a steady project of personal ambition, she would have wanted nothing to render her the equal of Richelieu, or at least of Mazarin. As it was, she made herself the most redoubtable enemy of both. Richelieu worked indefatigably to win her to his side; failing, was compelled to send her time after time into exile; and, in giving from his deathbed directions for the political conduct of Louis XIII., declared that her continued banishment was one of the prime conditions of peace and security. The private memoranda and confidential letters of Mazarin, many of which are published by M. Cousin for the first time, bear continual testimony to the importance which he attached to this lady's movements. Reconciled with her during the Fronde, he paid practical respect to her advice in matters of state, which at this period were always matters of intrigue; and when, in 1660, Louis de Haro congratulated the cardinal upon his complete political success, and the repose which he and France might henceforward hope to enjoy, the minister replied, "You Spaniards may think so; your women mix themselves up only with love-affairs: but it is not so with us; we have three amongst us who are quite capable of governing or of overturning three great kingdoms—the Duchess de Longueville, the Princess Palatine, and the Duchess de Chevreuse."

At an early age Madame de Chevreuse became the favourite of Anne of Austria, and occupied a high position in her court. They were of the same age; and the queen, neglected by her husband and oppressed by Richelieu, found amusement and counsel—not always, it is to be presumed, of the safest—from the gay and subtle duchess. In 1625 Lord Rich, afterwards Lord Holland, was deputed to the court of France to ask the hand of Henrietta, the sister of Louis XIII., for the Prince of Wales. The Englishman was young and handsome; pleased

Madame de Chevreuse, and engaged her in English interests. This was her début in love and politics. Her first visit to England was in the escort of Henrietta. The next authentic lover of this lady was the famous Chalais, who suffered on the scaffold for a conspiracy, of which the real object is to this day doubtful. Madame de Chevreuse was exiled for her association in this affair. She departed from the brilliant court with vows of vengeance, which she religiously remembered. She asked permission to go to England, where Holland, Buckingham, and Charles I. were her friends. This, unluckily for Richelieu, was refused, and Lorraine fixed upon for her place of banishment. She at once made a conquest of the Duke Charles IV., at that time the ally of Austria. The duchess succeeded in extending the league to England and Savoy. This coalition was dissolved by the fall of Rochelle; and, in negotiating peace, Charles I. made the return of the duchess to France one of its most pressing conditions. Richelieu consented, much against his inclination; and the lady returned, to add the astute minister himself to the number of those who were subdued by her personal charms, at that time in all their splendour. But, to the credit of Madame de Chevreuse as a woman, let it be said, that she always made her politics subservient to her *liaisons*, and never these to her politics. She scorned to feign even a friendship which she did not feel, and boldly preferred Chateauneuf to the position which seems at this time to have been sought by his all-powerful master. Chateauneuf had committed himself to the service of Richelieu, and had been rewarded by him with the government of Touraine and a high official position in the court. He conceived for Madame de Chevreuse a passion of which a man at fifty is usually supposed to be incapable; and the devotion of the lady, though younger by nearly twenty years, was not less sincere and entire. The cardinal soon perceived a change in his confidential minister, and discerned its cause; and many letters from the duchess to her lover are filled with accounts of the cardinal's jealousy of and anxiety to prevent their intercourse. These letters are of great interest, and bear traces of that grandeur of mind which was at this time a kind of moral tradition among the French nobility, and which nothing but a combination of the vices of the period with extreme vulgarity of nature, as in Madame de Montbazon, could obscure. Love and accordance with the laws of society are the conditions of a true alliance between man and woman; but in almost every age one or other of those conditions seems to have been regarded practically as non-essential. In the days of chivalry, which was not yet over in the time of Madame de Chevreuse, love was looked upon by most persons as all in all; just as legality is now. We do not venture to say

which ought to be condemned as the worst mistake. The following paragraph from one of these letters will sufficiently indicate the tone which it was possible, in the early part of the seventeenth century, for a woman sincerely to maintain, under conditions which, in later days, would be far too morally depressing to allow of such a style: "Je vous conseille, ne pouvant pas encore dire que je vous commande, et ne voulant plus dire que je vous prie, de porter le diamant que je vous envoie, afin que voyant cette pierre, qui a deux qualités, l'une d'être ferme, l'autre si brillante qu'elle parait de loin et fait voir les moindres défauts, vous vous souveniez qu'il faut être ferme dans vos promesses pour qu'elles me plaisent, et ne point faire de fautes pour que je n'en remarque point." The defection of Chateaufort, and the inveterate, though always courteously-conducted, hatred of Madame de Chevreuse towards Richelieu, enraged the haughty minister, who, seeing that conciliation was impossible, banished her again, first to one of her *terres* near Paris, and afterwards to Touraine; where she remained four years, and relieved her ennui by getting up a mysterious correspondence between the queen, Charles IV. of Lorraine, Henrietta of England, and the King of Spain. Richelieu made this correspondence with the enemies of France the ground of the most serious accusations against Madame de Chevreuse and the queen; and, in fact, it seems certain that it was of a more or less treasonable character. The queen was greatly humiliated, but nothing could be brought home to her intriguing friend. An erroneous signal, however,—a Book of Hours sent to the latter by the queen's *dame d'atours*, Madame de Hautefort, bound in red instead of green,—was taken as an intimation that flight was necessary; and the adventurous duchess escaped into Spain on horseback and in male attire, after various *rencontres*, which demanded all the extraordinary courage and presence of mind of which she was mistress. Philip IV. received the friend of his sister with all demonstrations of honour, and it is said that he himself enlarged the list of her conquests. Finding correspondence with France almost impossible, she passed from Spain into England, at that time neutral, and received the warmest welcome from Charles I., Henrietta, and a number of her old friends at the court. Here her pecuniary resources became exhausted; she was soon involved in heavy debt; and, weary of exile under circumstances so painful to her pride, she opened negotiations with Richelieu for her return. The minister hoped to make use of her influence with the Duke of Lorraine, dreaded the effects of the free exercise of her powers in a foreign country, and gladly treated with her through Boisville and the Abbé du Dorat. The spectacle of this negotiation, which lasted for more than a year, and was after all abortive, is a

curious one. All the cunning of Richelieu was exhausted in persuading her into his power. The duchess was his match, and refused to return without fuller guarantees than the minister chose to give for her personal safety from the results of any criminalizing information regarding her past conduct, which might possibly be in his possession; and subsequent warnings from the Duke of Lorraine, and from Anne of Austria herself, confirmed Madame de Chevreuse in her suspicions that Richelieu, under forms of courtesy, and even kindness, was preparing her destruction. This truce at an end, Madame de Chevreuse renewed with redoubled zeal her active hostility against the cardinal. The Duke de la Valette, summoned to take his trial before one of those unconstitutional and tyrannical commissions which were the chief scandal of Richelieu's administration, fled to England, and, through the intercession of the exiled duchess with Charles I., was received at the court, to the justifiable indignation of the practical ruler of France. The duchess became the head of an active and powerful faction of emigrants, who maintained a strict intelligence with the cabinet of Madrid, and made themselves a source of continual danger and anxiety to Richelieu. In 1641 we find Madame de Chevreuse at Brussels, and acting as the bond of communication between England, Spain, and Lorraine. Subsequently she was associated with the Count de Soissons and Cinq Mars in their attempts against Richelieu. The Queen of France, charged again with participation in the anti-ministerial intrigues, sacrificed her faithful ally, the duchess, to ingratiate herself with the all-powerful cardinal, and insisted upon her continued exclusion from France. At this time the fortunes of Madame de Chevreuse were at their worst; her enemy was triumphant; her friends traitorous or weak; her resources exhausted; her return to France, her children, and her possessions, apparently hopeless. Richelieu died; and Louis XIII., who, during his short survival was faithful to his minister's policy, quickly followed him, leaving in his will an especial clause against Madame de Chevreuse and her friend Chateauneuf, for whom so much had been suffered and undertaken by her. The continued banishment of the one, and imprisonment of the other, were declared to be matters of state necessity; but within a few days of the death of the king, the provisions of this document were revised or rejected by the Parliament, Anne declared regent without the control of a council, Chateauneuf came forth from his prison, and his faithful mistress the duchess returned to France, bold in the hope that she and the ancient Garde des Sceaux would henceforth be to the queen what Richelieu had been to Louis XIII. But the duchess had not made her calculations with her usual skill; she had made allowance neither for the

change which ten years of the hard discipline of circumstances had necessarily wrought upon the queen, nor for the still greater change which the imposition of a new and great responsibility is apt to bring about in moral character. Anne, though destined ever, as a woman, to be the subject of personal, was no longer the slave of petty influence. The splendid and powerful monarchy which Richelieu had half created was too precious a possession to be frittered away for the gratification of the few great heads of houses who still maintained the pretensions which Richelieu had worked so long and so effectually to subdue. Anne received back her old favourite with courtesy, but without warmth; and it was not long before the duchess discovered that Richelieu had left an heir to his power in the person of Mazarin. The duchess at the time of her return knew little or nothing of Mazarin; but Mazarin knew her very well, and at once comprehended the necessity of refusing her any share with himself in the queen's confidence. His policy, however, was always subtle and conciliatory, and it was some time before Madame de Chevreuse gave up her cherished hope of exalting Chateauneuf to the supreme conduct of affairs. Chateauneuf was not her only protégé; and in proportion as the prospect of succeeding in advancing him diminished, she grew bolder in the espousal of the cause of the nobles, who had been the enemies of Richelieu and of the integrity of the monarchical power, and who now began to find in Mazarin a scarcely less formidable opponent. At a time when all was external civility and even gallantry between Mazarin and the duchess, the discerning and well-informed minister makes a memorandum to the effect that "*mes plus grands ennemis sont les Vendôme et Mme. de Chevreuse.*" Innumerable sentences equally explicit remain, in the handwriting of Mazarin, to show that he regarded her as the head of the "*Importants,*" whose squabbles and intrigues were about to be developed into the tragi-comedy of the Fronde. The object at first proposed by the party was to supplant the influence of Mazarin with the queen; and this proving hopeless,—for the connection of Anne and her minister was soon recognised for something far stronger than a political one,—they proposed to deal with him in a more summary manner; and the reality of the conspiracy of the *Importants* to assassinate the minister, together with the part taken in it by Madame de Chevreuse, are points which M. Cousin's researches and reasonings establish beyond doubt. Mazarin, assisted by fortune and a miraculously effective system of *espionage*, turned the machinations of his enemies to his own account, and forced the queen-regent to invest him with absolute authority to deal with his enemies as he chose. The consequence was the arrest of the Duke de Beaufort, and the dispersion of the conspi-

rators who were openly implicated. Madame de Chevreuse ventured to present herself at court the very day after the attempted assassination had failed; but, on the arrest of Beaufort, the queen courteously intimated to her that, although she believed her innocent of the designs of the prisoner, it would be as well that she should quietly retire first to her house at Dampierre, and afterwards to Touraine, whither Chateaucneuf had himself been "invited" to retire. There the indefatigable lady continued her intrigues against the minister with undiminished vigour, and was soon ordered to take up her abode at Angoulême. At this place there was a state prison, in which Chateaucneuf had been confined for ten years for her sake. Dreading lest this order implied something worse than banishment, she once more determined on flight from France. After many adventures and hardships, she reached the Spanish Netherlands, and made Liège for a time her headquarters, whence she kept up an extensive correspondence, and laboured to maintain and improve the alliance between Austria, Spain, and Lorraine, upon which the last hopes of her party rested. Mazarin did all he could to detach Charles IV. of Lorraine from this league; but his plans were successfully combated by the duchess. The storm which now burst forth in the Fronde may almost be considered to have been of her raising; for, besides herself, and until the accession to the party of the great Condé and his sister the Duchess de Longueville, it boasted of no leader of real power; its ostensible head, the Duke de Beaufort, being a person wholly incapable of managing the intrigues into which he plunged, and of which he fancied himself to be the soul. We have neither space nor inclination to follow this wonderful woman through the Fronde. At its commencement she was nearly fifty years old, and during its course she seems for the first time to have begun to think of her own and her family's interests. Hitherto her hates and her loves had ruled her, to the exclusion of all other considerations. She vacillated for some time between Mazarin and Condé, to whose brother, the Prince de Conti, she hoped to marry her daughter Charlotte; but finally the errors of Condé showed her where fortune was likely to settle, and she ended by concluding a sincere alliance with her old but faithless friend Anne and her enemy Mazarin. The Duc de Chevreuse dying in 1657, the duchess, then nearly sixty, married the last of her many lovers, the Marquis de Laignes; and, having outlived all who had interested her, Richelieu and Mazarin, Louis XIII. and Anne of Austria, Chateaucneuf and the Duke of Lorraine, her first lover Lord Holland, and her latest De Laignes, it is said that she became "dévoté." At all events, she ended her days in a tranquillity and a retirement according much better with her age than with her antecedents.

Such is the outline of the life of this extraordinary woman. The moral is almost too obvious to be dwelt upon. She was not a bad woman: as the times went, she ought rather to be looked upon as the reverse; her *liaisons* were irregular, but not vulgar; her passions were violent, but not low, for they could suffer the prolonged absence of their object without changing or expiring; her friendships were sincere and constant; and even in her hostilities she displayed a natural loyalty which rendered them respectable; her energy and courage in action, her cheerfulness and spirit in adversity, were unsurpassed; and if her moral constitution, upon the whole, was thus at worst but mediocre, her talents were astonishing. Of how many of the men who have done great services, and made great figures in the world, could more than this be said? Madame de Chevreuse had, indeed, all the qualities of a great man but one, and that was the power of acting from other than personal interests. She was a woman with an extraordinary endowment of every intellectual faculty consisting with womanhood; but she could not reject her nature, which was to be subordinate, if not gracefully by submission of will, then disgracefully by wayward devotion of passion; and, as if to point the moral more sharply, to men inferior to herself in every quality but—*manhood*. Insubordinate in her very love, she insisted upon serving her friends and paramours in her own way and not in theirs, and the consequence was that La Rochefoucauld could with justice accuse her of having injured all with whom she was in any way connected.

The character and career of Madame de Longueville were too much like those of Madame de Chevreuse to be described by us at any length. We can only direct attention to those points in which the characteristics of the first were the complement of those of the last—the two taken together making one complete illustration of what womanhood is when diverted from its sphere and vocation. The faults of Madame de Longueville, if not so many or so grave as those of Madame de Chevreuse, were, to our thinking, far more disagreeable. If the perversion of a woman's perfections is painful to behold, much more so is that of her peculiar and, in their sphere, permissible defects. Great beauty, wit, and courage, were in both ladies diverted from their proper uses; but woman's personal vanity, which charms our masculine prejudices when it is in moderation and employed about her own personal attractions, is above all other things repulsive when it mocks a masculine ambition, and pretends to an interest in abstract principles of science, politics, and theology. We confess that Madame de Chevreuse conspiring the death of Mazarin is not nearly so offensive to our nerves as Madame de Longueville in either of the comparatively innocent positions of *précieuse*-in-

chief at the Maison Rambouillet, criticising the couplets of Voiture; of generalissimo of the Fronde, giving directions to and receiving homages from crowds of dilettanti rebels at the Hôtel de Longueville; or of doctor of divinity at Port-Royal, disputing Jansenist points with the graceful *gourmande* Madame de Sablé. Her *liaison* with the selfish but magnificently showy La Rochefoucauld may reasonably be suspected of having had for its motive as much of worldly vanity as passion; and his conduct after its termination moves us more with contempt for him than pity for her. No woman, deserving such praises as are lavished by M. Cousin upon Madame de Longueville, could ever have been won to the sacrifice of her virtue and reputation by the cold trickster which the author of the *Maximes*, with inconceivable moral fatuity, declares himself, in his Memoirs, to have been in regard to her. Vexed with Mazarin and the queen at not succeeding in obtaining from them a certain purely formal court precedence, which he had no right whatever to expect, he tells us that he determined upon revenge; saw that Condé must be made the chief instrument of it, and that he was to be won from his loyalty only through his sister, Madame de Longueville, to whom he was tenderly attached. We translate from his *Mémoires*,—which, with incredible baseness, he allowed to circulate during the life of his late mistress, and with falsehood and cowardice disavowed when he began to find what *men* thought of him, and how they were likely to act towards him,—the passage in which this *soi-disant* Bayard chuckles over his villany:

“The beauty of Madame de Longueville, her intellect, and her various personal charms, attached to her all who could hope to be tolerated by her. She was at this time so united with her family, and so tenderly loved by the Duc d’Enghien, her brother, that to please her was to possess his friendship. Many persons tried this way in vain, and mixed their ambition with other sentiments. Miossens, since Marshal of France, persevered long, but with no success. I was one of his particular friends, and he told me his designs. He feigned hopes which he did not and could not really feel. So some time passed, until at last I had reason to believe that I could make a better use than he of the attachment and confidence of Madame de Longueville. I convinced him that this was the case, but assured him that consideration for him would always withhold me from forming an attachment (*prendre des liaisons*) with Madame de Longueville unless I had his consent. I even confess that I purposely embittered his mind towards her; without, however, saying any thing that was not the truth. He gave her up to me entirely; but he repented when he saw the results of this *liaison*.”

The writer of this passage, in his anxiety to obtain credit for profound cunning, seems to have overlooked the inevitable con-

clusion that either this account, or the boast he loved to make while the "attachement" in question was going on, that

'Pour mériter son cœur, pour plaire à ses beaux yeux,
J'ai fait la guerre aux rois, je l'aurais faite aux dieux,'

was a *lie*. As to which of the boasts was the best founded, there cannot be much doubt. We repeat, that we cannot entertain any very exalted admiration for a woman who could give herself to such a man under *any* circumstances, far less under conditions of feeling which would allow of her subsequent light-minded infidelity with the Duc de Nemours, whereby even La Rochefoucauld was provoked to a resentment deeper than should have been dictated by his worldly interests.

"But now," says M. Cousin, in commencing his life of Madame de Hautefort, after having finished that of Madame de Chevreuse,—“now we have to describe a very different person; one who will lead us among the same events, but who will carry thither a wholly different character. She appears as the enemy, but not the rival of Richelieu; her life does not belong to political history; she does not dispute the government of France with the two great cardinals, she only refuses to betray for them her friends and her cause; her cause being, or at least always appearing to her to be, that of religion and virtue.” It is always thus. A noble woman is only to be praised by negatives, all positive commendations sounding gross and partial beside her delicate and elaborate loveliness.

Marie de Hautefort was born in 1616, and was soon after left an orphan and committed to the charge of her grandmother, Madame de la Flotte Hauterive. Her early years were passed in the country; but there was much talk of the court and its pleasures at her grandmother's house; and the beautiful and intellectual girl, at eleven years of age—then almost a woman in figure—and then and always too innocent to have any element of asceticism in her sincere piety, offered fervent prayers to Heaven to be allowed to—*go to court!* Madame de la Flotte had affairs which brought her to Paris; Marie went with her, and made such an impression, that the queen-mother, Mary de Medicis, at once placed her among her maids-of-honour. Though but twelve years of age, her manners were distinguished by that “*très grand air, tempéré par une retenue presque sévère,*” which to the last continued to be the quality of her chaste and noble loveliness. Her beauty of person must have been of the very loftiest kind, if we may judge from the careful reproduction of an authentic portrait which accompanies the *Life*, and from the effect which she immediately produced in the most brilliant and fastidious court in the world. She had the name of Aurora given to her, as de-

scriptive of her fresh and innocent splendour. When she was fourteen the king fell in love with her. He took her away from the queen-mother, and placed her with the queen-consort, who at first was naturally somewhat shy of a maid-of-honour who was manifestly a rival. But Anne soon discovered in Mademoiselle de Hautefort a mind from which she had nothing to dread. As for the *affections* of the king, Anne enjoyed too little of them at any time to care much for the platonic alliance which she saw plainly was the worst she had to fear; she soon found also that her misfortunes and neglect constituted a much more powerful claim to the noble girl's attachment than the power and prestige of the greatest monarch in the world. Thus the favourite of the king enjoyed the singular distinction of being at the same time scarcely less the favourite of his wife. The first public mark of attention from the king to the maid-of-honour was on occasion of a sermon, at which the queen and the court were present. The maids-of-honour, according to custom, were seated on the ground. The king sent the velvet, on which he was kneeling, for Mademoiselle de Hautefort to sit upon. She blushed with confusion, obeyed a sign from the queen to take it, but placed it by her side. Such a mixture of modesty and tact was not unappreciated in the court of France. On another occasion an incident occurred which will serve to explain how the position of Mademoiselle de Hautefort was one against which not the slightest exception could be taken, a little allowance being made for the liberal manners of the seventeenth century. The king entered the apartment of the queen as she and her maid-of-honour were discussing a note, containing something that it was not desired that the king should see. He pressed very much to obtain it, and Mademoiselle de Hautefort found it impossible to keep the queen's secret except by placing the paper in her bosom. This at once terminated the dispute; although in M. Cousin's version of the story—which is not the one we have adopted as the most probable—the queen in jest held the hands of the beautiful girl, and dared the king to take the letter from its sanctuary. Though the religion of Louis, and his reverence for this noble lady, prevented him from affronting her with his passion, his extreme jealousy was a source of continual annoyance to her; and many a time the pride of the good and gay young beauty resented the assiduities and pretensions of an *amitié* which had no right to such exclusiveness, and no foundations for such suspicions; for, with several of the noblest gentlemen of France at her feet, Mademoiselle de Hautefort's heart was untouched. After these misunderstandings with his "friend," Louis would sit and sulk in a corner for hours; and there was no gaiety at the court until a good understanding was restored. At this time the affections of the maid-of-honour were

chiefly set upon her mistress, for whose sake alone she seems to have endured attentions which, to say the least, incommoded her. Madame de Motteville, in her *Memoirs*, assures us that Mademoiselle de Hautefort treated Louis at all times "as badly as it was permitted to treat a king." His neglect and hatred of his wife, founded upon the atrocious suspicions which Richelieu, for political purposes, succeeded in bringing upon her, deprived him of the respect of one whose generous nature revolted against all appearance of injustice. Towards Richelieu himself, as the chief author of the queen's misfortunes, she entertained feelings of contempt and dislike which she made no effort to conceal, although the mighty minister loaded her with compliments and attentions, calculating that her presence at the court was not fitted to increase the favour of Anne with Louis. Finding, however, that all his endeavours to change her from an enemy into a friend were vain, and that she was doing more service to the queen by pleading her cause than disservice by her personal attractions, Richelieu determined upon getting rid of her influence. He persuaded the king that she ridiculed his manners and his passion in his absence; and, instead of appeasing his scruples of conscience, as heretofore, he represented his affection as dangerous and contrary to religion. These means proving only partially effective, Richelieu called into play a rival beauty, Louise Angélique de la Fayette, who, with scarcely inferior virtues and personal attractions, had a nature more sympathetic with that of Louis. The king found in this lady a compassionate, patient, and friendly listener to the sorrows and complaints which he delighted in talking about to women; and their relationship soon ripened into the high and tender friendship which was ordinarily the limit of the king's "amours;" for, with all his weaknesses, his religion was sincere and his refinement remarkable; and the woman whom he could have suspected of a willingness to sacrifice her dignity to his affection would never have possessed it. In this instance, however, the king in a moment of passion forgot his better knowledge and Mademoiselle de la Fayette's honour so far as to propose that she should take up her residence at Versailles, and be "toute à lui." His punishment was heavy, but just. The noble young lady, between whom and himself there had for two years subsisted a most deep and happy friendship, determined, after many regrets and a strong struggle with her heart, to have no further communication with him but through the grating of a nunnery. Upon these terms, however, the king continued for many months to see her at the convent of St. Mary of the Visitation. Like Mademoiselle de Hautefort, Mademoiselle de la Fayette was constant in her favourable representations of the queen to her consort; and it was after one of

these singular visits, that the king, prevented by a storm from returning to St. Maur, stopped a night at the Louvre, where was the queen, who nine months after gave birth to Louis XIV. During this period, Mademoiselle de Hautefort remained in the service of Anne, who was almost entirely abandoned by Louis, and solaced herself with maintaining, chiefly by means of Madame de Chevreuse, a correspondence with her royal relatives of Spain, then at war with France. The fact of this correspondence was treasonous; and the nature of it, whatever it may have been, was such that the queen had the greatest terror of its transpiring. At one moment her fate depended upon the correspondence of her replies to the examination imposed upon her by Richelieu with the statements of her confidant and aid La Porte, who was then in the Bastille. Mademoiselle de Hautefort, as heroic as she was beautiful and tender, disguised herself *en grisette*, left the Louvre at dawn, went in a *fiacre* alone to the Bastille, waited ever so long exposed to the coarse pleasantries of the *corps de garde* at the gate, obtained a solitary interview with the Chevalier de Jars, who had just received his pardon on the very scaffold for his part in the queen's affairs, prevailed upon him to risk his head again by making himself the means of conveying a letter to La Porte, returned as she came, had the good fortune to reach her apartment unrecognised; and was then for the first time overcome with the terrible risks to which she had exposed herself, and, what she prized far more, her unblemished reputation. In the political intrigues of the queen and Madame de Chevreuse she had no interest. Richelieu and the king were unjust; Anne suffered, and required service and consolation; and that was all the noble maiden knew or cared to know.

The prospect of the queen's becoming a mother, as soon as it was known, made a great improvement in her position with the king, who was thus again thrown into the society of Mademoiselle de Hautefort. His passion, for a time suspended by his affection for Mademoiselle de la Fayette, revived, and maintained for two years more its chaste and stormy life. The proud maiden refused to acquire any advantage to her not very splendid fortune; and the only honour she consented to receive was one from the hands of the queen—namely, the office of *dame d'atours*, which entitled her to be called Madame. Richelieu's jealousies reawakened with the passion of the king; there was no second Louise de la Fayette at hand; and the minister took advantage of the part which he had the means of proving that Mademoiselle de Hautefort had taken in aiding the queen in her forbidden correspondence with Madame de Chevreuse and other active enemies of the cardinal, to demand the dismissal of the favourite from the court. Louis resisted. Richelieu had recourse to his

last and always successful trick : he gave the king to understand that he must choose between his minister and his mistress. Even this argument, however, only prevailed upon Louis to consent to her being exiled for a period of fourteen days. She refused to believe the direction to absent herself, on receiving it through Richelieu, and obtained an audience of the king, demanding of what crime she was accused. Louis replied that the order was wrung from him against his will ; that it was but for temporary reasons of state, and that it gave him the greatest grief. This was not enough to satisfy the dignity and self-respect of the lady, who told him that in bidding him adieu for fourteen days she bade him adieu for ever. Mademoiselle de Chémérault, another of the queen's ladies, was dismissed at the same time ; but only in order that she might continue to act as Richelieu's spy upon the words and actions of the noble creature, who fancied her her sincere friend. Mademoiselle de Hautefort thought that the queen had not treated Mademoiselle de Chémérault with sufficient generosity in the gifts she made her on her dismissal ; and, utterly careless of her own interests, she addressed to Anne the noblest letter of remonstrance which it has ever been our happiness to read. Louis died without beholding her again ; and, indeed, his fickle nature had been diverted from his sorrow for her loss by a new favourite, Cinq Mars. Anne was no sooner a widow than she begged Madame de Hautefort to return. She was now twenty-seven, and at the height of her beauty. She became the chief ornament of the famous Maison Rambouillet—at that time the place of reunion for the most refined and exclusive society the world has seen. Here, surrounded by the atmosphere of literary dilettantism, which turned all her contemporaries more or less into blue-stockings, and which in its less-dignified development at the assemblies of Mademoiselle de Scudéry afterwards provoked the ridicule of Molière, Madame de Hautefort's delicacy and tact preserved her from the airs of the *précieuse*. The few letters of her writing which remain are “ toujours spirituelles, mais très négligées ; ” and a contemporary writer says, “ Pour les vers, c'est sa passion : et, quoiqu'elle n'en fasse point, elle les récite comme si elle les faisait.” As she was free from the prevailing intellectual dilettantism, she was equally a stranger to the more tempting, and, at that time, all but universal dilettantism of the affections. The consequence was, that the passions she inspired were deep, sincere, and really chivalrous. The mock chivalry of La Rochefoucauld became genuine towards her. On the eve of a battle he gave her brother a letter, containing a declaration of his love, to be given to her if he died ; if not, to be returned. “ C'était là,” says M. Cousin, “ comme on faisait la cour à Mlle. de Hautefort.” Her nobler

charms for a while eclipsed the attractions of Madame de Chevreuse in the eyes of Charles of Lorraine. On one occasion he took prisoner a French gentleman whom he discovered to be slightly acquainted with her. "I give you your liberty," he said; "and require nothing for your ransom but the honour of hearing that you have kissed, upon my part, the hem of the robe of Madame de Hautefort." And many another, in whom love had hitherto been vice, found it the well-head of virtue when inspired by her. A noble young soldier, the Marquis de Gèvres, had the inexpressible honour and happiness of touching the heart of this lady; but her royal admirer prevented their marriage, which was in course of arrangement; and, just as De Gèvres was restored to his hopes by the king's death, and was about to receive the staff of Marshal of France for his brilliant services, he was killed at the siege of Thionville. Madame de Hautefort's magnificent reserve upon all points touching her *own* interests and feelings permitted to none of the aristocratic memoir-writers of the time the means of informing posterity how far she was affected by these incidents.

Madame de Hautefort, on her return to the court of Anne of Austria, after the death of Richelieu and Louis XIII., had every reason to calculate upon reaping the reward of her faithful services, as far as such services can be rewarded temporally, in the unimpeded favour of the queen, who was now a queen indeed. But this change from the position of the powerless and oppressed consort to the absolute regent was not really favourable to Madame de Hautefort any more than it had been to Madame de Chevreuse. Madame de Hautefort cared very little for politics, and very much for her personal friends; and she was not prepared to look coldly upon all her old alliances, formed at first in the service and interest of the queen, merely because Anne, with a sense of responsibility which made the sacrifice a virtue in *her*, chose to abandon her former connections, and to take up with the partisans of Richelieu and the monarchy. The loyalty of Madame de Hautefort was of too high and heavenly a character for that. Her position at court, which she by no means undervalued, might still, however, have been maintained, had it not been for the peculiar favour to which Mazarin now rose, and the scandal created by his nightly conferences with the queen. It was more than the pride and delicacy of the *dame d'atours* could bear. Moreover, she was *dévoté* full twenty years before the usual age,—for she was now only twenty-seven, and in all the splendour of her beauty; and affairs of state, which were made the excuse for these conferences, were trifles in her eyes when compared with a wilful indifference to even the "appearance of evil." She regarded silence under these circumstances as a crime; and, far from being

intimidated by the dangers of interference and expostulation, those dangers acted as provocatives to a virtue of which the only drawback was a heroic intemperance, and a slight defect of suavity when, but only when, it had to do with the failings of kings and queens. In fact, Madame de Hautefort treated Anne, in her turn, "as ill as it was permitted to treat a queen;" that is to say, she displayed a marked disapproval of her conduct, and made no concealment of her dislike of Mazarin, which was unmitigated, although he, like Richelieu, did his very best to be well with her. Failing, he, like his predecessor, determined to get rid of her uncongenial influence; and the very means which Richelieu had used with Louis XIII., Mazarin employed with his royal mistress. He represented Madame de Hautefort as being in the habit of *publicly* expressing her views of the queen's conduct; and Anne, already irritated by the private representations of her *dame d'atours*, was completely estranged from her in heart by the calumnies and exaggerations of the minister. But to dismiss her from the court was not a step to be taken in haste. Madame de Hautefort was the idol of two very considerable parties, the Importants and the Saints; and in the court itself she was without an enemy besides Mazarin, and the mistress whom she persisted in serving too well. The little king, Louis XIV., was devotedly attached to her, and used to call her his wife; and several of the chief nobles of the country were suitors for her hand; in particular, Gassion, the general-in-chief of the French cavalry, the Duke de Liancour, and the Duke Charles de Schomberg, who were among the most valuable servants of the monarchy, were devoted to this lady with a passion which would not have forgiven any injury to her. The Duke de Schomberg seemed to be favoured by Madame de Hautefort; and it was highly to Mazarin's interest that an alliance should take place which would make her the wife of a man who hated partisanship, and would at least secure her neutrality towards the chief minister whom he served. Our readers must be sufficiently interested by this time in Madame de Hautefort to be curious to know something about the man who was to be her husband. He is thus painted by a contemporary: "Il avait les premières charges de la cour; il ne voyait que les princes au-dessus de lui. Il était fait à peu près comme on dépeint les héros de romans: il était noir; mais sa mine haute, guerrière, et majestueuse, inspirait du respect à ses amis et de la crainte à ses ennemis; il était magnifique, libéral, et avait fait des dépenses extraordinaires dans les emplois qu'il avait eu en commandant les armées de France. Sa mine était tellement pleine de majesté, qu'un jour, étant chez une dame et étant dans la ruelle avec un habit fort brillant d'or et d'argent, une nourrice de cette dame entrant dans la chambre

en fut si surprise qu'elle s'approcha d'une demoiselle et lui demanda quel roi était là auprès de sa maîtresse?" A man, in externals at least, not unworthy of our heroine. But her true and stately soul did nothing in haste. She subjected her suitor's passion to the test of a long and dubious courtship; and felt herself bound not to abandon the court, as she probably might have to do for Languedoc, which was De Schomberg's government, until all had been done to retrieve the queen from her position with Mazarin; who was thus at length compelled to obtain by open rupture what he had hoped to effect quietly, and as if in the interest of his proud and beautiful enemy. The party of the Importants were scattered by a sort of *coup-d'état*, as we have seen in the story of Madame de Chevreuse; several even of the ladies about the queen's person were dismissed or warned; and Madame de Hautefort, of all Mazarin's political enemies, was the only one of any consequence who escaped defeat and humiliation on this occasion. She was far above suspicion of having had any part in the conspiracy which threw so many others into Mazarin's power; the candour and openness of her enmity puzzled and awed the prince of intriguers, and enabled her to dispute his influence with the queen, long after all the Importants, including the infinitely clever Madame de Chevreuse, were for the time put to silence. Madame de Hautefort was moreover to the party of the Saints what Madame de Chevreuse was to the Importants; and her opposition to Mazarin was made formidable by being supported with the whole influence of the *religieuses* of the convents of the Filles-de-Sainte-Marie, the Carmelites, and the Val-de-Grâce. But the warfare thus carried on afforded no cause for open accusation; and it was upon the always somewhat rash generosity of Madame de Hautefort in interceding for those whom she considered to have been unjustly treated, that her fall from court favour was made to depend. She irritated the queen greatly by representations in favour of Beaufort, in whose guilt she did not believe; and on one occasion was so emphatic in recommending the claims of some old servant to Anne's consideration, that the queen told her plainly that she was weary of her reprimands, and altogether dissatisfied with her conduct; and the next morning the *dame d'atours* received a command to quit the court. For a time she was in despair at having, as it appeared, irrevocably offended her to whose service her entire life had been devoted. Like Louise Angélique de la Fayette, she withdrew to the convent of Filles-de-Sainte-Marie, with the intention of becoming one of the *religieuses*; but, happily for the world, her lovely light was destined not to be so hidden under a bushel. Her adorers showed the sincerity of their vows by hastening to renew them now that she was in disgrace. The Duke de

Schomberg's solicitations were listened to; and Madame de Hautefort, after a crowning act of nobility which we have not space to relate, but which involved a momentary giving up of her lover for the supposed interests of his family, became the Duchess de Schomberg at the age of thirty, in the year 1646. For ten years she was the tenderest and happiest of wives, and afterwards the holiest of widows. Her personal beauty increased with years, as perfectly noble beauty always does. As she had been the ornament of the Maison Rambouillet without affectation of literature, she now became that of Port-Royal without mixing herself with the Jansenist quarrel. It was in vain that Louis XIV. endeavoured to persuade her back to the court, "afin," as he said, "d'y rétablir la dignité et la grandeur qu'on commence à ne plus y voir." She led a life of active and unpretentious piety until 1691, which was the date of her translation from a life of grace to one of glory.

Where else shall we find another like her? Lady Rachel Russell, her contemporary, was nearer to her than any other we remember; an additional example in confirmation of the remark that nature is fond of bringing forth extraordinary persons in pairs; but Lady Russell seems neither to have had that magnificent physique, nor those splendid opportunities, which confer such a grand and full perfection on the picture of Madame de Hautefort. Do what we will with our understandings and moral principles, we can never make puritans of our tastes; and however the mind may cry *peccavi* for its preference, of two beautiful natures it always will prefer that which goes the most gloriously clad. Neither will the feelings accept potentialities for actualities. Lady Russell, in Madame de Hautefort's circumstances, almost certainly would have been no less noble; nay, it is more than likely that she would have avoided Madame de Hautefort's one mistake, which seems to have been an unnecessarily plainspoken way towards those who happened to have the power of resenting it with overwhelming effect. As it was, however, Lady Russell's opportunities were limited; and so France is left to boast the production of the most imposingly noble woman with whom history has made us acquainted.

We are aware that many of our readers will altogether dispute the principles by which we are induced to attribute such an eminence to a woman who was nothing more than a woman, holding the old orthodox rank of the "weaker vessel," and *as such* claiming peculiar honour; who was too much attached to her friends ever to soar quite out of the region of personalities; whose virtues were never startling, being all strung like pearls upon the silken thread of *propriety*; who was not without that amiable vanity which enhances our admiration by seeming not ungrateful

for it; who, in fine, though virtuous and heroic when occasion required, was at all times and on all occasions nothing so much as womanly. Many others have been as virtuous, as beautiful, and as heroic; but none else has in an equal degree glorified these perfections by such an attractive radiance of *womanhood*,—that mysterious influence, which we can only describe by negatives and contradictions; that charming subordination, which affects us less as the necessity of a weaker being than as the complaisance of a nature which would rather persuade than command; that flattering inferiority, which allows us the leadership in wisdom, and is content that we should preach, so that it maintains the monopoly of the good example; that ever-present and ever-intangible charm, whose best praise is that it is the reverse of manhood. Marie de Hautefort has first taught us what a woman may be, and what a man may aspire to deserve.

We gladly take the opportunity of repeating, in connection with her life, what M. Guizot says, in concluding his beautiful essay on Lady Russell, called "*L'Amour dans le Mariage*:"

"I have felt profound pleasure in relating the history of this lady, so pure in her passion, always great, and always humble in her greatness, faithful and devoted, with equal ardour to her feelings and her duties in grief and joy, in triumph and adversity. Our times are attacked with a deplorable malady: men believe only in the passion which is attended with moral derangement: infinite love, perfect devotion, all ardent, exalted, and soul-mastering sentiments, appear to them impossible within the bounds of moral laws and social conventions; all order seems to them a paralysing yoke, all submission a debasing servitude; no flame is any thing if it is not a devouring conflagration. This disease is all the graver because it is not the crisis of a fever, nor the explosion of an exuberant force. It springs from perverse doctrines, from the rejection of law, faith, and superhuman existence, from the idolatry of man, who takes himself for God. And with this disease there is joined another no less lamentable: man not only adores nothing but himself; but even himself he adores only in the multitude where all men are confounded. He hates and envies every thing that rises above the vulgar level; all superiority, all individual grandeur, seems to him an iniquity and an injury towards that chaos of undistinguished and ephemeral beings whom he calls humanity. When he perceives, in the higher walks of society, some great scandal, some odious instance of vice and crime, he rejoices, and ardently turns it to the worst account against social superiorities, making it to be believed that such things are the natural consequences of high birth, great fortune, aristocratic condition. When we have been assailed by

these base doctrines, and the shameful passions which give birth to, or are born from, them; when we have felt the hatefulness of them and measured the peril, it is a very lively delight to meet with one of those noble examples which are their splendid confutation. In proportion as I respect humanity in its totality, I admire and love those glorified images of humanity, which personify and set on high, under visible features and with a proper name, whatever it has of most noble and most pure. Lady Russell gives the soul this beautiful and virtuous joy. *C'est une grande dame chrétienne.*" And if Lady Russell and Madame de Hautefort are splendid and unanswerable replies to vulgar depreciations of aristocracy, they offer no less forcible and illustrious denials of the calumnies on womanhood which with our generation pass for praise. Of all the monstrous births of modern philosophy, surely none is so monstrous, so marked with *moral* ignorance and deterioration, as the doctrine of the equality of man and woman, in the form in which it is at present widely preached. No woman, who has read the foregoing pages, will suspect us of desiring to derogate from her honour; and, indeed, our indignation is, not so much because the doctrine in point diminishes the honour of man, as because it sullies by misrepresenting that of his gentle ally. Surely she has points of superiority enough, without disputing the sole points which we and nature deny to her—namely, wisdom for the legislative, and force for the executive, in life. Well aware that we really abuse what we overrate, we yet deliberately admit an excellency of nature in woman which puts to the blush the best results of grace in man. Her superiority to man in that wherein he most excels the beasts, religion; his physical inferiority to her in almost every thing but that in which the beasts excel him, strength; the only virtue in which she does not share being that in which they do, physical courage; her far greater readiness to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep; her infinite versatility, which caused an old writer to say: "Sing of the nature of woman, and then the song shall be surely full of varieties, old crotchets, and most sweet closes,—it shall be humour grave, fantastic, loving, melancholy, sprightly, one in all and all in one;" her beauty, which is love visible, which purifies our passions in exciting them, and makes our desires glow like sunny clouds in the sky of a pure conscience; her voice, which is audible benevolence; her manner, a miracle of lovely tact, and candour subtly-paced as guile;—these and other praises, which would exhaust us long before we exhausted them, are surely enough to countervalue that poor predominance of power with which the brain and muscles of man are indefeasibly endowed, and which force kingship upon him in the very teeth

of his false philosophy. The happiness and dignity of man and woman require, not a confusion, but a complete distinction, of their relations; and the title of the "weaker vessel," being, on the best authority, the woman's peculiar title to honour, is not to be forgotten and ignored, but contemplated and loved. Only thus can their absolutely infinite capability of being mutually exalted come into effect. They are like the two plates of the philosophical instrument called the electrical doubler, which by mutual opposition under proper circumstances indefinitely intensify their contrasted conditions: her softness, delicacy, tenderness, compliance, fear, and confidence, opposed to whatever strength, courage, gravity, firmness, dignity, and originality, there may have been in him before, render a certain exaltation of these virtues, for her sake, easy; every such exaltation upon his part induces in her a more passionate submission, whereby her peculiar qualities are correspondingly developed; and every such increment of loving and intelligent self-devotion calls upon him, in turn, for the delightful exercise of a higher degree of manhood, in order that he may deserve it. How hopeful would be that reform which should begin where life begins, in the relation of the sexes! How hopeless all reforms which attempt to clear the social current any where but at its source! There are certain moral processes which seem to be antecedent to religion. St. Paul tells us that the man who does not provide for those of his own household has not only denied the faith, but "*is worse than an infidel*;" and religion does not so much teach as assume a knowledge of the primary *facts* of nature, which those, who in our day are worse than infidels, represent as *doctrines*, in order that it may be possible to deny them. The family titles are those by which God reveals His relation to us and ours to Him; and to misinterpret them is to obscure revelation in its very terms. The human affections are the living figures by which we are to be taught to comprehend and feel those which are divine. The performance of natural duties, and the possession of natural knowledge, constitute and indicate that "honest and good heart," which we are told is not the fruit of the seed of faith, but the ground in which it must be sown, in order to come to perfection. Now the relation of husband and wife, besides being the first and strongest of human ties, is the source from which they all spring; and a miscomprehension of the nature of the primary relation necessarily involves error in the understanding of those which are derivative.

In conclusion, let us thank M. Cousin for a series of works—for each of these four volumes is a "work" in a sense in which few books are so now—which will probably bring him quite as much credit as his graver performances. We have met with few

volumes, in which the history of France during the time of Louis XIII. and the Regency can be so agreeably and safely studied, by one who already knows something of the subject, as in these. They contain the fruits of many years' research, pursued with enthusiasm, and now put forth with simplicity and integrity. The style of M. Cousin is perfectly free from the epigrammatic and antithetical cleverness which casts suspicion upon the writings of some even of the soundest of modern French writers. We rise from the perusal of these volumes with the liveliest impressions of the characters of Richelieu, Mazarin, Louis XIII., Anne of Austria, Condé, La Rochefoucauld, and many others; but there is little or none of the set character-painting of which French writers are commonly so fond. The effects are all made by an honest rendering of *facts*. To the professed historian, the most valuable portions of these publications will be the voluminous appendices, consisting of unpublished documents, for the most part of high interest.

ART. IV.—PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley. Edited by Mrs. Shelley. 1853.

Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations, and Fragments. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Edited by Mrs. Shelley. 1854.

The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley. By Captain Thomas Medwin. 1847.

AFTER the long biography of Moore, it is half a comfort to think of a poet as to whom our information is but scanty. The few intimates of Shelley seem inclined to go to their graves without telling in accurate detail the curious circumstances of his life. We are left to be content with vague "prefaces" and the circumstantial details of a remarkable blunderer. We know something, however;—we know enough to check our inferences from his writings; in some moods it is pleasant not to have them disturbed by long volumes of memoirs and anecdotes.

One peculiarity of Shelley's writing makes it natural that at times we should not care to have, that at times we should wish for, a full biography. No writer has left so clear an image of himself in his writings; when we remember them as a whole, we seem to want no more. No writer, on the other hand, has left so many little allusions which we should be glad to have ex-

plained, which the patient patriarch would not perhaps have endured that any one should comprehend while he did not. The reason is, that Shelley has combined the use of the two great modes by which writers leave with their readers the image of themselves. There is the art of self-delineation. Some authors try in imagination to get outside themselves—to contemplate their character as a fact, and to describe it and the movement of their own actions as external forms and images. Scarcely any one has done this as often as Shelley. There is hardly one of his longer works which does not contain a finished picture of himself in some point or under some circumstances. Again, some writers, almost or quite unconsciously, by a special instinct of style, give an idea of themselves. This is not peculiar to literary men; it is quite as remarkable among men of action. There are people in the world who cannot write the commonest letter on the commonest affair of business without giving a just idea of themselves. The Duke of Wellington is an example which at once occurs of this. You may read a despatch of his about bullocks and horseshoe-nails; and yet you will feel an interest—a great interest, because somehow among the words seems to lurk the mind of a great general. Shelley has this peculiarity also. Every line of his has a personal impress, an unconscious inimitable manner. And the two modes in which he gives an idea of himself concur. In every delineation we see the same simple intense being. As mythology found a Naiad in the course of every liquid stream, so through each eager line our fancy sees the same panting image of sculptured purity.

Shelley's is probably the most remarkable instance of the pure impulsive character. Some men are born under the law: their whole life is a continued struggle between the lower principles of their nature and the higher. These are what are called men of principle; each of their best actions is a distinct choice between conflicting motives. One propension would bear them here; another there; a third would hold them still: into the midst the living will goes forth in its power, and selects whichever it holds to be best. The habitual supremacy of conscience in such men gives them an idea that they only exert their will when they do right; when they do wrong they seem to "let their nature go;" they say that "they are hurried away:" but, in fact, there is commonly an act of will in both cases;—only it is weaker when they act ill, because in passably good men, if the better principles are reasonably strong, they conquer; it is only when very faint that they are vanquished. Yet the case is evidently not always so; sometimes the wrong principle is of itself and of set purpose definitely chosen. The very existence of divided natures is a conflict. This is no new description

of human nature. For eighteen hundred years Christendom has been amazed at the description in St. Paul of the law of his members warring against the law of his mind. Expressions most unlike in language, but not dissimilar in meaning, are to be found in some of the most familiar passages of Aristotle.

In extreme contrast to this is the nature which has no struggle. It is possible to conceive a character in which but one impulse is ever felt—in which the whole being, as with a single breeze, is carried in a single direction. The only exercise of the will in such a being is in aiding and carrying out the dictates of the single propensity. And this is something. There are many of our powers and faculties only in a subordinate degree under the control of the emotions; the intellect itself in many moments requires to be bent to defined attention by compulsion of the will; no mere intensity of desire will thrust it on its tasks. But of what in most men is the characteristic action of the will,—namely, self-control,—such natures are hardly in want. An ultimate case could be imagined in which they would not need it at all. They have no lower desires to pull down, for they have no higher ones which come into collision with them; the very words ‘lower’ and ‘higher,’ involving the contemporaneous action and collision of two impulses, are inapplicable to them; there is no strife; all their soul impels them in a single line. Of course this may be a quality of the highest character: indeed, in the highest character it will certainly be found; no one will question that the whole nature of the holiest being tends to what is holy without let, struggle, or strife—it would be impiety to doubt it. Yet this same quality may certainly be found in a lower—a much lower—mind than the highest. A level may be of any elevation; the absence of intestine commotion may arise from a sluggish dullness to eager aspirations; the one impulse which is felt may be any impulse whatever. If the idea were completely exemplified, one would instinctively say, that a being with so single a mind could hardly belong to human nature. Temptation is the mark of our life; we can hardly divest ourselves of the idea that it is indivisible from our character. As it was said of solitude, so it may be said of the sole dominion of a single impulse, “Whoso is devoted to it would seem to be either a beast or a god.”

Completely realised on earth this idea will never be; but approximations may be found, and one of the closest of those approximations is Shelley. We fancy his mind placed in the light of thought, with pure subtle fancies playing to and fro. On a sudden an impulse arises; it is alone, and has nothing to contend with; it cramps the intellect, pushes aside the fancies, constrains the nature; it *bolts* forward into action. Such a cha-

racter is an extreme puzzle to external observers. From the occasionality of its impulses it will often seem silly; from their singularity, strange; from their intensity, fanatical. It is absurd in the more trifling matters. There is a legend of Shelley, during an early visit to London, flying along the street, catching sight of a new microscope, buying it in a moment; pawning it the instant afterwards to relieve some one in the same street in distress. The trait may be exaggerated, but it is characteristic. It shows the sudden irruption of his impulses, their abrupt force and curious purity.

The predominant impulse in Shelley from a very early age was "a passion for reforming mankind." Mr. Newman has told us in his *Letters from the East* how much he and his half-missionary associates were annoyed at being called "young people trying to convert the world." In a strange land, ignorant of the language, beside a recognised religion, in the midst of an immemorial society, the aim, though in a sense theirs, seemed ridiculous when ascribed to them. Shelley would not have felt this at all. No society, however organised, would have been too strong for him to attack. He would not have paused. The impulse was upon him. He would have been ready to preach that mankind were to be "free, equal, pure, and wise,"—in favour of "justice, and truth, and time, and the world's natural sphere,"—in the Ottoman empire, or to the Czar, or to George III. Such truths were independent of time and place and circumstance; some time or other, something, or somebody, (his faith was a little vague) would most certainly intervene to establish them. It was this placid undoubting confidence which irritated the positive and sceptical mind of Hazlitt. "The author of the '*Prometheus Unbound*,'" he tells us, "has a fire in his eye, a fever in his blood, a maggot in his brain, a hectic flutter in his speech, which mark out the philosophic fanatic. He is sanguine-complexioned and shrill-voiced. As is often observable in the case of religious enthusiasts, there is a slenderness of constitutional stamina, which renders the flesh no match for the spirit. His bending, flexible form appears to take no strong hold of things, does not grapple with the world about him, but slides from it like a river—

'And in its liquid texture mortal wound
Receives no more than can the fluid air.'

The shock of accident, the weight of authority, make no impression on his opinions, which retire like a feather, or rise from the encounter unhurt, through their own buoyancy. He is clogged by no dull system of realities, no earth-bound feelings, no rooted prejudices, by nothing that belongs to the mighty trunk and hard husk of nature and habit; but is drawn up by irresistible

levity to the regions of mere speculation and fancy, to the sphere of air and fire, where his delighted spirit floats in 'seas of pearl and clouds of amber.' There is no *caput mortuum* of worn-out threadbare experience to serve as ballast to his mind; it is all volatile intellectual salt-of-tartar, that refuses to combine its evanescent, inflammable essence with any thing solid or any thing lasting. Bubbles are to him the only realities:—touch them, and they vanish. Curiosity is the only proper category of his mind; and though a man in knowledge, he is a child in feeling." And so on with vituperation. No two characters could, indeed, be found more opposite than the open, eager, buoyant poet, and the dark, threatening, unbelieving critic.

It is difficult to say how far such a tendency under some circumstances might not have carried Shelley into positions most alien to an essential benevolence. It is most dangerous to be possessed with an idea. Dr. Arnold used to say that he had studied the life of Robespierre with the greatest personal benefit. No personal purity is a protection against insatiable zeal; it almost acts in the opposite direction. The less a man is conscious of inferior motives, the more likely is he to fancy that he is doing God service. There is no difficulty in imagining Shelley cast by the accident of fortune into the Paris of the Revolution; hurried on by its ideas, undoubting in its hopes, wild with its excitement, going forth in the name of freedom conquering and to conquer;—and who can think that he would have been scrupulous how he attained such an end? It was in him to have walked towards it over seas of blood. One could almost identify him with St. Just, the "fair-haired republican."

On another and a more generally interesting topic, Shelley advanced a theory which amounts to a deification of impulse. "Love," he tells us, "is inevitably consequent upon the perception of loveliness. Love withers under constraint: its very essence is liberty; it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear; it is there most pure, perfect, and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality, and unreserve. . . . A husband and wife ought to continue united only so long as they love each other. Any law which should bind them to cohabitation for one moment after the decay of their affection would be a most intolerable tyranny, and the most unworthy of toleration. How odious an usurpation of the right of private judgment should that law be considered, which should make the ties of friendship indissoluble, in spite of the caprices, the inconstancy, the fallibility, of the human mind! And by so much would the fetters of love be heavier and more unendurable than those of friendship, as love is more vehement and capricious, more dependent on those delicate peculiarities of

imagination, and less capable of reduction to the ostensible merits of the object." This passage, no doubt, is from an early and crude essay, one of the notes to "Queen Mab;" and there are many indications, in his latter years, that though he might hold in theory that "constancy has nothing virtuous in itself," yet in practice he shrank from breaking a tie hallowed by years of fidelity and sympathy. But though his conduct was doubtless higher than his creed, there is no evidence that his creed was ever changed. The whole tone of his works is on the other side. The "Epipsychidion" could not have been written by a man who attached a moral value to constancy of *mind*. And the whole doctrine is most expressive of his character. A quivering sensibility endured only the essence of the most refined love. It is intelligible, that one who bowed in a moment to every desire should have attached a kind of consecration to the most pure and eager of human passions.

The evidence of Shelley's poems confirms this impression of him. The characters which he delineates have all this same kind of pure impulse. The reforming impulse is especially felt. In almost every one of his works there is some character, of whom all we know is, that he or she had this passionate disposition to reform mankind. We know nothing else about them, and they are all the same. Laon, in the "Revolt of Islam," does not differ at all from Lionel, in "Rosalind and Helen." Laon differs from Cythna, in the former poem, only as male from female. Lionel is delineated, though not with Shelley's greatest felicity, in a single passage :

" Yet through those dungeon-walls there came
Thy thrilling light, O liberty !
And as the meteor's midnight flame
Startles the dreamer, sunlight truth
Flashed on his visionary youth,
And filled him, not with love, but faith,
And hope, and courage, mute in death ;
For love and life in him were twins,
Born at one birth : in every other
First life, then love its course begins,
Though they be children of one mother :
And so through this dark world they fleet
Divided, till in death they meet.
But he loved all things ever. Then
He passed amid the strife of men,
And stood at the throne of armed power
Pleading for a world of woe :
Secure as one on a rock-built tower
O'er the wrecks which the surge trails to and fro.
'Mid the passions wild of human-kind
He stood, like a spirit calming them ;
For, it was said, his words could bind
Like music the lulled crowd, and stem

That torrent of unquiet dream
Which mortals truth and reason deem,
But is revenge, and fear, and pride.
Joyous he was, and hope and peace
On all who heard him did abide,
Raining like dew from his sweet talk,
As, where the evening star may walk
Along the brink of the gloomy seas,
Liquid mists of splendour quiver."

Such is the description of all his reformers in calm. In times of excitement, they all burst forth—

"Fear not the tyrants shall rule for ever,
Or the priests of the bloody faith;
They stand on the brink of that mighty river
Whose waves they have tainted with death;
It is fed from the depths of a thousand dells,
Around them it foams, and rages, and swells:
And their swords and their sceptres I floating see,
Like wrecks in the surge of eternity."

In his more didactic poems it is the same. All the world is evil, and will be evil, until some unknown conqueror shall appear—a teacher by rhapsody and a conqueror by words—who shall at once reform all evil. Mathematicians place great reliance on the unknown symbol, great X. Shelley did more; he expected it would take life and reform our race. Such impersonations are, of course, not real men; they are mere incarnations of a desire. Another passion, which no man has ever felt more strongly than Shelley—the desire to penetrate the mysteries of existence (by Hazlitt profanely called curiosity)—is depicted in "Alastor" as the sole passion of the only person in the poem:

"By solemn vision and bright silver dream
His infancy was nurtured. Every sight
And sound from the vast earth and ambient air
Sent to his heart its choicest impulses.
The fountains of divine philosophy
Fled not his thirsting lips; and all of great,
Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past
In truth or fable consecrates, he felt
And knew. When early youth had past, he left
His cold fire-side and alienated home
To seek strange truths in undiscovered lands.
Many a wide waste and tangled wilderness
Has lured his fearless steps; and he has bought
With his sweet voice and eyes, from savage men,
His rest and food."

He is cheered on his way by a beautiful dream, and the search to find it again mingles with the shadowy quest. It is remarkable how great is the superiority of the personification in "Alastor," though one of his earliest writings, over the reforming

abstractions of his other works. The reason is, its far greater closeness to reality. The one is a description of what he was; the other of what he desired to be. Shelley had nothing of the magic influence, the large insight, the bold strength, the permeating eloquence, which fit a man for a practical reformer; but he had, in perhaps an unequalled and unfortunate measure, the famine of the intellect—the daily insatiable craving after the highest truth—which is the passion of "Alastor." So completely did he feel it, that the introductory lines of the poem almost seem to identify him with the hero; at least they express sentiments which would have been exactly dramatic in his mouth:

"Mother of this unfathomable world!
Favour my solemn song; for I have loved
Thee ever, and thee only: I have watched
Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy steps,
And my heart ever gazes on the depth
Of thy deep mysteries. I have made my bed
In charnels and on coffins, where black death
Keeps records of the trophies won from thee,
Hoping to still these obstinate questionings
Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone ghost,
Thy messenger, to render up the tale
Of what we are. In lone and silent hours,
When night makes a weird sound of its own stillness,
Like an inspired and desperate alchymist,
Staking his very life on some dark hope,
Have I mixed awful talk and asking looks
With my most innocent love; until strange tears,
Uniting with those breathless kisses, made
Such magic as compels the charmed night
To render up thy charge . . . and, though ne'er yet
Thou hast unveiled thy inmost sanctuary,
Enough from incommunicable dream,
And twilight fantasms and deep noonday thought,
Has shone within me, that serenely now,
And moveless as a long-forgotten lyre,
Suspended in the solitary dome
Of some mysterious and deserted fane,
I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that my strain
May modulate with murmurs of the air,
And motions of the forests and the sea,
And voice of living beings, and woven hymns
Of night and day, and the deep heart of man."

The accompaniments are fanciful; but the essential passion was his own.

These two forms of abstract personification exhaust all which can be considered characters among Shelley's poems—one poem excepted. Of course, all his works contain "Spirits," "Phantasms," "Dream No. 1," and "Fairy No. 3;" but these do not belong to this world. The higher air seems never to have been favourable to the production of marked character; with almost

all poets the inhabitants of it are prone to a shadowy thinness: in Shelley, the habit of frequenting mountain-tops has reduced them to evanescent mists of lyrical energy. One poem of Shelley's, however, has two beings of another order; creations which if not absolutely dramatic characters of the first class—not beings whom we know better than we know ourselves—are nevertheless very high specimens of the second; persons who seem like vivid recollections from our intimate experience. In this case the dramatic execution is so good, that it is difficult to say why the results are not quite of the first rank. One reason of this is, perhaps, their extreme simplicity. Our imaginations, warned by consciousness and outward experience of the wonderful complexity of human nature, refuse to credit the existence of beings, all whose actions are unmodified consequences of a single principle. These two characters are Beatrice Cenci and her father Count Cenci. In most of Shelley's poems—he died under thirty—there is an extreme suspicion of aged persons. In actual life he had plainly encountered many old gentlemen who had no belief in the complete and philosophical reformation of mankind. There is, indeed, an old hermit in the "Revolt of Islam" who is praised, (Captain Medwin identifies him with a Dr. Some-one who was kind to Shelley at Eton); but in general the old persons in his poems are persons whose authority it is desirable to disprove:

" Old age, with its gray hair
And wrinkled legends of unworthy things
And icy sneers, is naught."

The less its influence, he evidently believes, the better. Not unnaturally, therefore, he selected for a tragedy a horrible subject from Italian story, in which an old man, accomplished in this world's learning, renowned for the "cynic sneer of o'er-experienced sin," is the principal evil agent. The character of Count Cenci is that of a man who of set principle does evil for evil's sake. He loves "the sight of agony:"

" All men delight in sensual luxury;
All men enjoy revenge; and most exult
Over the tortures they can never feel,
Flattering their secret peace with others' pain:
But I delight in nothing else."

If he regrets his age, it is from the failing ability to do evil:

" True, I was happier than I am while yet
Manhood remained to act the thing I thought;
While lust was sweeter than revenge: and now
Invention palls."

It is this that makes him contemplate the violation of his daughter:

"There yet remains a deed to act,
Whose horror might make sharp an appetite
More dull than mine."

Shelley, though an habitual student of Plato—the greatest modern writer who has taken great pleasure in his writings—never seems to have read any treatise of Aristotle; otherwise he would certainly seem to have derived from that great writer the idea of the ἀκόλαστος; yet in reality the idea is as natural to Shelley as any man—more likely to occur to him than to most. Children think that every body who is bad is very bad. Their simple eager disposition only understands the doing what they wish to do; they do not refine: if they hear of a man doing evil, they think he wishes to do it,—that he has a special impulse to do evil, as they have to do what they do. Something like this was the case with Shelley. His mind, impulsive and childlike, could not imagine the struggling kind of character—either those which struggle with their lower nature and conquer, or those which struggle and are vanquished—either the ἐγκρατής or the ἀκρατής of the old thinker; but he could comprehend that which is in reality far worse than either, the being who wishes to commit sin because it is sin, who is as it were possessed with a demon hurrying him on, hot and passionate, to vice and crime. The innocent child is whirled away by one impulse; the passionate reformer by another; the essential criminal, if such a being be possible, by a third. They are all beings, according to one division, of the same class. An imaginative mind like Shelley's, belonging to the second of these types, naturally is prone in some moods to embody itself under the forms of the third. It is, as it were, the antithesis to itself.—Equally simple is the other character—that of Beatrice. Even before her violation, by a graphic touch of art, she is described as absorbed, or beginning to be absorbed, in the consciousness of her wrongs:

"Beatrice. As I have said, speak to me not of love.
Had you a dispensation, I have not;
Nor will I leave this home of misery
Whilst my poor Bernard, and that gentle lady
To whom I owe life and these virtuous thoughts,
Must suffer what I still have strength to share.
Alas, Orsino! all the love that once
I felt for you is turned to bitter pain.
Ours was a youthful contract, which you first
Broke by assuming vows no Pope will loose:
And thus I love you still, but holily,
Even as a sister or a spirit might;
And so I swear a cold fidelity."

After her violation, her whole being is absorbed by one thought,—how and by what subtle vengeance she can expiate the me-

mory of her shame. These are all the characters in Shelley; an impulsive unity is of the essence of them all.

The same characteristic of Shelley's temperament produced also most marked effects on his speculative opinions. The peculiarity of his creed early brought him into opposition to the world. His education seems to have been principally directed by his father, of whom the only description which has reached us is not favourable. Sir Timothy Shelley, according to Captain Medwin, was an illiterate country gentleman of an extinct race; he had been at Oxford, where he learned nothing; had made the grand tour, from which he brought back "a smattering of bad French and a bad picture of an eruption at Vesuvius." He had the air of the old school, and the habit of throwing it off which distinguished that school. Lord Chesterfield himself was not easier on matters of morality. He used to tell his son that he would provide for natural children *ad infinitum*, but would never forgive his making a *mésalliance*. On religion his opinions were very lax. He, indeed, "required his servants," we are told, "to attend church," and even on rare occasions, with superhuman virtue, attended himself; but there, as with others of that generation, his religion ended. He doubtless did not feel that any more could be required of him. He was not consciously insincere; but he did not in the least realise the opposition between the religion which he professed and the conduct which he pursued. Such a person was not likely to influence a morbidly sincere imaginative nature in favour of the doctrines of the Church of England. Shelley went from Eton, where he had been singular, to Oxford, where he was more so. He was a fair classical scholar; but his real mind was given to out-of-school knowledge. He had written a novel; he had studied chemistry; when pressed in argument, he used to ask, "What, then, does Condorcet say upon the subject?" This was not exactly the youth for the University of Oxford in the year 1810. A distinguished pupil of that University once observed to us, "The use of the University of Oxford is, that no one can over-read themselves there. The appetite for knowledge is repressed. A blight is thrown over the ingenuous mind, &c." And possibly it may be so; considering how small a space literary knowledge fills in the busy English world, it may not be without its advantages that any mind prone to bookish enthusiasm should be taught by the dryness of its appointed studies, the want of sympathy of its teachers, and a rough contact with average English youth, that studious enthusiasm must be its own reward; that in this country it will meet with little other; that it will not be encouraged in high places. Such discipline may, however, be carried too far. A very enthusiastic mind may possibly by it be turned in upon itself. Such was the case

with Shelley. When he first came up to Oxford physics were his favourite pursuit. On chemistry, especially, he used to be eloquent. "The galvanic battery," said he, "is a new engine. It has been used hitherto to an insignificant extent; yet it has worked wonders already. What will not an extraordinary combination of troughs of colossal magnitude, a well-arranged system of hundreds of metallic plates, effect?" Nature, however, like the world, discourages a wild enthusiasm. "His chemical operations seemed to an unskilful observer to promise nothing but disasters. He had blown himself up at Eton. He had inadvertently swallowed some mineral poison, which he declared had seriously injured his health, and from the effects of which he should never recover. His hands, his clothes, his books, and his furniture, were stained and covered by medical acids," and so on. Disgusted with these and other failures, he abandoned physics for metaphysics. He rushed headlong into the form of philosophy then popular. It is not likely that he ever read Locke; and it is easy to imagine the dismay with which the philosopher would have regarded so "heady and skittish" a disciple: but he continually invoked Locke as an authority, and was really guided by the French expositions of him then popular. Hume, of course, was not without his influence. With such teachers only to control him, an excitable poet rushed in a moment to materialism, and thence to atheism. Deriving any instruction from the University, was, according to him, absurd; he wished to convert the University. He issued a kind of thesis, stating by way of interrogatory all the difficulties of the subject; called it the "necessity of atheism," and sent it to the professors, heads of houses, and several bishops. The theistic belief of his college was equal to the occasion. "It was a fine spring morning on Lady-day in the year 1811, when," says a fellow-student, "I went to Shelley's rooms. He was absent; but before I had collected our books, he rushed in. He was terribly agitated. I anxiously inquired what had happened. 'I am expelled.' He then explained that he had been summoned before the Master and some of the fellows; that as he was unable to deny the authorship of the essay, he had been expelled, and ordered to quit the college the next morning at latest." He had wished to be put on his trial more regularly, and stated to the Master that England was "a free country;" but without effect. He was obliged to leave Oxford: his father was very angry; "if he had broken the Master's windows, one could have understood it;" but to be expelled for publishing a *book* seemed an error incorrigible, because incomprehensible.

These details at once illustrate Shelley's temperament, and enable us to show that the peculiarity of his opinions arose out of

that temperament. He was placed in circumstances which left his eager mind quite free. Of his father we have already spoken : there was no one else to exercise a subduing or guiding influence over him ; nor would his mind have naturally been one extremely easy to influence. Through life he followed very much his own bent and his own thoughts. His most intimate associates exercised little control over his belief. He followed his nature ; and that nature was in a singular degree destitute of certain elements which most materially guide ordinary men. It seems most likely that a person prone to isolated impulse will be defective in the sensation of conscience. There is scarcely room for it. When, as in common conflicting characters, the whole nature is daily and hourly in a perpetual struggle, the faculty which decides what elements in that nature are to have the supremacy is daily and hourly appealed to. Passions are contending ; life is a discipline ; there is a reference every moment to the directory of the discipline--the order-book of the passions. In temperaments not exposed to the ordinary struggle there is no such necessity. Their impulse guides them ; they have little temptation ; are scarcely under the law ; have hardly occasion to consult the statute-book. In consequence, simple and beautiful as such minds often are, they are deficient in the sensation of duty ; have no haunting idea of right or wrong ; show an easy *abandon* in place of a severe self-scrutiny. At first it might seem that such minds lose little ; they are exempted from the consciousness of a code to whose provisions they need little access. But such would be the conclusion only from a superficial view of human nature. The whole of our inmost faith is a series of intuitions ; and experience seems to show that the intuitions of conscience are the beginning of that series. Childhood has little which can be called a religion ; the shows of this world, the play of its lights and shadows, suffice. It is in the collision of our nature, which occurs in youth, that the first real sensation of faith is felt. Conscience is often then morbidly acute ; a flush passes over the youthful mind ; the guiding instinct is keen and strong, like the passions with which it contends. At the first struggle of our nature commences our religion. Childhood will utter the words ; in early manhood, when we become half-unwilling to utter them, they begin to have a meaning. The result of history is similar. The whole of religion rests on a faith that the universe is solely ruled by an almighty and all-perfect Being. This strengthens with the moral cultivation, and grows with the improvement of mankind. It is the assumed axiom of the creed of Christendom ; and all that is really highest in our race may have the degree of its excellence tested by the degree of the belief in it. But experience shows that the belief

only grows very gradually. We see at various times, and now, vast outlying nations in whom the conviction of morality,—the consciousness of a law,—is but weak; and there the belief in an all-perfect God is half-forgotten, faint, and meagre. It exists as something between a tradition and a speculation; but it does not come forth on the solid earth; it has no place in the business and bosoms of men; it is thrust out of view even when we look upwards by fancied idols and dreams of the stars in their courses. Consider the state of the Jewish, as compared with the better part of the pagan world of old. On the one side we see civilisation, commerce, the arts, a great excellence in all the exterior of man's life; a sort of morality sound and sensible, placing the good of man in a balanced moderation within and good looks without,—in a combination of considerate good sense, with the *air* of aristocratic, or, as it was said, "godlike," refinement. We see, in a word, civilisation, and the ethics of civilisation; the first polished, the other elaborated and perfected. But this is all; we do not see faith. We see in some quarters rather a horror of the *curiosus deus* interfering, controlling, watching,—never letting things alone,—disturbing the quiet of the world with punishment and the fear of punishment. The Jewish side of the picture is different. We see a people who have perhaps an inaptitude for independent civilisation, who in secular pursuits have only been assistants and attendants on other nations during the whole history of mankind. These have no equable, beautiful morality like the others; but instead a gnawing, abiding, depressing—one might say, a slavish—ceremonial, excessive sense of law and duty. This nation has faith. By a link not logical, but ethical, this intense, eating, abiding supremacy of conscience is connected with a deep daily sense of a watchful, governing, and jealous God. And from the people of the law arises the gospel. The sense of duty, when awakened, awakens not only the religion of the law, but in the end the other religious intuitions which lie round about it. The faith of Christendom has arisen not from a great people, but from "the least of all people,"—from the people whose anxious legalism was a noted contrast to the easy, impulsive life of pagan nations. In modern language, conscience is the *converting* intuition,—that which turns men from the world without to that within,—from the things which are seen to the realities which are not seen. In a character like Shelley's, where this haunting, abiding, oppressive moral feeling is wanting or defective, the religious belief in an Almighty God which springs out of it is likely to be defective likewise.

In Shelley's case this deficiency was aggravated by what may be called the abstract character of his intellect. We have shown

that no character except his own, and characters most strictly allied to his own, are delineated in his works. The tendency of his mind was rather to personify isolated qualities or impulses—equality, liberty, revenge, and so on—than to create out of separate parts or passions the single conception of an entire character. This is, properly speaking, the mythological tendency. All early nations show this marked disposition to conceive of separate forces and qualities as a kind of semi-persons; that is, not true actual persons with distinct characters, but beings who guide certain influences, and of whom all we know is that they guide those influences. Shelley evinces a remarkable tendency to deal with mythology in this simple and elementary form. Other poets have breathed into mythology a modern life; have been attracted by those parts which seem to have a religious meaning, and have enlarged that meaning while studying to embody it. With Shelley it is otherwise; the parts of mythology by which he is attracted are the bare parts,—the simple stories which Dr. Johnson found so tedious:

“ Arethusa arose
 From her couch of snows
 In the Acroceraunian mountains.
 From cloud and from crag,
 With many a jag,
 Shepherding her bright fountains,
 She leapt down from the rocks
 With her rainbow locks
 Streaming among the streams;
 Her steps paved with green
 The downward ravine,
 Which slopes to the western gleams;
 And gliding and springing,
 She went ever singing,
 In murmurs as soft as sleep;
 And earth seemed to love her,
 And heaven smiled above her,
 As she lingered towards the deep.
 Then Alpheus bold,
 On his glacier cold,
 With his trident the mountains shook,
 &c. &c.”

Arethusa and Alpheus are not characters; they are only the spirits of the stream. When not writing on topics connected with ancient mythology, Shelley shows the same bent. “The Cloud,” and the “Skylark,” are more like mythology—have more of the impulse by which the populace, if we may so say, of the external world was first fancied into existence—than any other modern poems. There is, indeed, no habit of mind more remote from our solid and matter-of-fact existence; none which was once powerful, of which the present traces are so rare. In truth,

Shelley's imagination achieved all it could with the materials before it. The materials for the creative faculty must be provided by the receptive faculty. Before a man can imagine what will seem to be realities, he must be familiar with what are realities. The memory of Shelley had no heaped-up "store of life," no vast accumulation of familiar characters. His intellect did not tend to the strong grasp of realities; its taste was rather for the subtle refining of theories, the distilling of exquisite abstractions. His imagination personified what his understanding presented to it. It had nothing else to do. He displayed the same tendency of mind—sometimes negatively and sometimes positively—in his professedly religious inquiries. His belief went through three stages—first, materialism, then a sort of nihilism, then a sort of Platonism. In neither of them is the rule of the universe ascribed to a character: in the first and last it is ascribed to animated abstractions; in the second there is no universe at all. In neither of them is there any strong grasp of fact. The writings of the first period are clearly influenced by, and modelled on, Lucretius. He held the same abstract theory of nature—sometimes of half-personified atoms, moving hither and thither of themselves—at other times of a general pervading spirit of nature, holding the same relation to nature, as a visible object, that Arethusa the goddess bears to Arethusa the stream:

 " The magic car moved on.
 As they approached their goal
The coursers seemed to gather speed :
The sea no longer was distinguished ; earth
 Appeared a vast and shadowy sphere :
 The sun's unclouded orb
 Rolled through the black concave ;
 Its rays of rapid light
Parted around the chariot's swifter course,
And fell like ocean's feathery spray
Dashed from the boiling surge
Before a vessel's prow.

 The magic car moved on.
 Earth's distant orb appeared
The smallest light that twinkles in the heaven ;
 Whilst round the chariot's way
Innumerable systems rolled,
And countless spheres diffused
An ever-varying glory.
It was a sight of wonder: some
Were horned like the crescent moon ;
Some shed a mild and silver beam
Like Hesperus o'er the western sea ;
Some dash'd athwart with trains of flame,
Like worlds to death and ruin driven ;
Some shone like suns, and, as the chariot passed,
Eclipsed all other light.

Spirit of Nature! here,
 In this interminable wilderness
 Of worlds, at whose immensity
 Even soaring fancy staggers,—
 Here is thy fitting temple.
 Yet not the lightest leaf
 That quivers to the passing breeze
 Is less instinct with thee :
 Yet not the meanest worm
 That lurks in graves and fattens on the dead
 Less shares thy eternal breath.
 Spirit of Nature! thou,
 Imperishable as this scene,—
 Here is thy fitting temple."

And he copied not only the opinions of Lucretius, but also his tone. Nothing is more remarkable than that two poets of the first rank should have felt a bounding joy in the possession of opinions which, if true, ought, one would think, to move an excitable nature to the keenest and deepest melancholy. That this life is all; that there is no God, but only atoms and a moulding breath; are singular doctrines to be accepted with joy; they only could have been so accepted by wild minds bursting with imperious energy, knowing of no law, "wreaking thoughts upon expression" of which they knew neither the meaning nor the result. From this stage Shelley's mind passed to another; but not immediately to one of greater belief. On the contrary, it was the doctrine of Hume which was called in to expel the doctrine of Epicurus. His previous teachers had taught him that there was nothing except matter: the Scotch sceptic met him at that point with the question—Is matter certain? Hume, as is well known, adopted the negative part from the theory of materialism and the theory of immaterialism, but rejected the positive side of both. He held, or professed to hold, that there was no substantial thing, either matter or mind; but only "sensations and impressions" flying about the universe, inhering in nothing and going nowhere. These, he said, were the only subjects of consciousness; all you felt was your feeling, and all you thought was your thought; the rest was only hypothesis. The notion that there was any "*you*" at all was a theory generally current among mankind, but not, unless proved, to be accepted by the philosopher. This doctrine, though little agreeable to the world in general, has an excellence in the eyes of youthful disputants; it is a doctrine which no one will admit, and which no one can disprove. Shelley accordingly accepted it; indeed, it was a better description of his universe than of most people's; his mind was filled with a swarm of ideas, fancies, thoughts, streaming on without his volition, without plan or order. He might be pardoned for fancying that they were all; he could not see the out-

ward world for them; their giddy passage occupied him till he forgot himself. He has put down the theory in its barest form: "The most refined abstractions of logic conduct to a view of life which, though startling to the apprehension, is, in fact, that which the habitual sense of its repeated combinations has extinguished in us. It strips, as it were, the painted curtain from this scene of things. I confess that I am one of those who am unable to refuse my assent to the conclusions of those philosophers who assert that nothing exists but as it is perceived." And again: "The view of life presented by the most refined deductions of the intellectual philosophy is that of unity. Nothing exists but as it is perceived. The difference is merely nominal between those two classes of thought which are vulgarly distinguished by the names of ideas and of external objects. Pursuing the same thread of reasoning, the existence of distinct individual minds, similar to that which is employed in now questioning its own nature, is likewise found to be a delusion. The words, *I*, *you*, *they*, are not signs of any actual difference subsisting between the assemblage of thoughts thus indicated, but are merely marks employed to denote the different modifications of the one mind. Let it not be supposed that this doctrine conducts to the monstrous presumption that *I*, the person who now write and think, am that one mind. I am but a portion of it. The words, *I*, and *you*, and *they*, are grammatical devices invented simply for arrangement, and totally devoid of the intense and exclusive sense usually attached to them. It is difficult to find terms adequate to express so subtle a conception as that to which the intellectual philosophy has conducted us. We are on that verge where words abandon us; and what wonder if we grow dizzy to look down the dark abyss of how little we know!" On his wild nerves these speculations produced a great effect. Their thin acuteness excited his intellect; their blank result appalled his imagination. He was obliged to pause in the last fragment of one of his metaphysical papers, "dizzy from thrilling horror." In this state of mind he began to study Plato; and it is probable that in the whole library of philosophy there is no writer so suitable to such a reader. A common modern author, believing in mind and matter, he would have put aside at once as loose and popular. He was attracted by a writer who, like himself, in some sense did not believe in either—who supplied him with subtle realities different from either, at once to be extracted by his intellect and to be glorified by his imagination. The theory of Plato, that the all-apparent phenomena were unreal, he believed already; he had a craving to believe in something noble, beautiful, and difficult to understand; he was ready, therefore, to accept the rest of that theory, and to believe

that these passing phenomena were imperfect types and resemblances—imperfect incarnations, so to speak—of certain immovable, eternal, archetypal realities. All his later writings are coloured by that theory, though in some passages the remains of the philosophy of the senses with which he commenced appear in odd proximity to the philosophy of abstractions with which he concluded. There is, perhaps, no allusion in Shelley to the *Phædrus*; but no one can doubt which of Plato's ideas would be most attractive to the nature we have described. The most valuable part of Plato he did not comprehend. There is in Shelley none of that unceasing reference to ethical consciousness and ethical religion which have for centuries placed Plato first among the preparatory preceptors of Christianity. The general doctrine is that

"The one remains, the many change and pass;
Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly;
Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
Stains the white radiance of eternity,
Until death tramples it to fragments."

The particular worship of the poet is paid to that one spirit whose

"Plastic stress
Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
All new successions to the forms they wear;
Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
And bursting in its beauty and its might
From trees, and beasts, and men, into the heaven's light."

It is evident that not even in this, the highest form of creed to which he ever clearly attained, is there any such distinct conception of a character as is essential to a real religion. The conception of God is not to be framed out of a single attribute. Shelley has changed the "idea" of beauty into a spirit, and this probably for the purposes of poetry; he has given it life and animal motion; but he has done no more: the "spirit" has no will, and no virtue: it is animated, but unholy; alive, but unmoral: it is an object of intense admiration; it is not an object of worship.

We have ascribed this quality of Shelley's writings to an abstract intellect; and in part, no doubt, correctly. Shelley had, probably by nature, such an intellect; it was self-enclosed, self-absorbed, teeming with singular ideas, remote from character and life; but so involved is human nature, that this tendency to abstraction, which we have spoken of as aggravating the consequences of his simple impulsive temperament, was itself aggravated by that temperament. It is a received opinion in metaphysics, that the idea of personality is identi-

cal with the idea of will. A distinguished French writer has accurately expressed this: "Le pouvoir," says M. Jouffroy, "que l'homme a de s'emparer de ses capacités naturelles et de les diriger fait de lui une *personne*; et c'est parce que les choses n'exercent pas ce pouvoir en elles-mêmes, qu'elles ne sont que des choses. Telle est la véritable différence qui distingue les choses des personnes. Toutes les natures possibles sont douées de certaines capacités; mais les unes ont reçu par dessus les autres le privilège de se saisir d'elles-mêmes et de se gouverner: celles-là sont les personnes. Les autres en ont été privées, en sorte qu'elles n'ont point de part à ce qui se fait en elles: celles-là sont les choses. Leurs capacités ne s'en développent pas moins; mais c'est exclusivement, selon les lois auxquelles Dieu les a soumises, c'est Dieu qui gouverne en elles, il est la personne des choses, comme l'ouvrier est la personne de la montre. Ici la personne est hors de l'être; dans le sein même des choses, comme dans le sein de la montre, la personne ne se rencontre pas; on ne trouve qu'une série de capacités qui se meuvent aveuglément, sans que la nature qui en est douée sache même ce qu'elles font. Aussi ne peut-on demander compte aux choses de ce qui se fait en elles; il faut s'adresser à Dieu: comme on s'adresse à l'ouvrier et non à la montre, quand la montre va mal." And if this theory be true—and doubtless it is an approximation to the truth—it is evident that a mind ordinarily moved by simple impulse will have little distinct consciousness of personality. While thrust forward by such impulse, it is a mere instrument. Outward things set it in motion. It goes where they bid; it exerts no will upon them; it is, to speak expressively, a mere conducting thing. When such a mind is free from such impulse, there is even less will; thoughts, feelings, ideas, emotions, pass before it in a sort of dream. For the time it is a mere perceiving thing. In neither case is there a trace of voluntary character. If we want a reason for any thing, "il faut s'adresser à Dieu."

Shelley's political opinions were likewise the effervescence of his peculiar nature. The love of liberty is peculiarly natural to the simple impulsive mind. It feels irritated at the idea of a law; it fancies it does not need it: it really needs it less than other men. Government seems absurd—society an incubus. It has hardly patience to estimate particular institutions: it wants to begin again—to make a *tabula rasa* of all which men have created or devised; for they seem to have been constructed on a false system, for an object it does not understand. On this *tabula rasa* Shelley's abstract imagination proceeded to set up arbitrary monstrosities of "equality" and "love," which never will be realised among the children of men.

Such a mind is clearly driven to self-delineation. Nature, no doubt, in some sense remains to it. A dreamy mind—a mind occupied intensely with its own thoughts—will often have a peculiarly intense apprehension of any thing which by the hard collision of the world it has been forced to observe. The scene stands out alone in the memory; is a refreshment from hot thoughts; grows with the distance of years. A mind like Shelley's, deeply susceptible to all things beautiful, has many pictures and images shining in its recollection which it recurs to, and which it is ever striving to delineate. Indeed, in such minds it is rather the picture in their mind which they describe than the original object; the "ideation," as some harsh metaphysicians call it, rather than the reality. A certain dreamlight is diffused over it; a wavering touch, as of interfering fancy or fading recollection. The landscape has not the hues of the real world; it is modified in the *camera obscura* of the self-enclosed intelligence. Nor can such a mind long endure the cold process of external delineation. Its own hot thoughts rush in; its favourite topic is itself and them. Shelley, indeed, as we observed before, carries this to an extent which no poet probably ever equalled. He described not only his character but his circumstances. We know that this is so in a large number of passages; if his poems were commented on by some one thoroughly familiar with the events of his life, we should doubtless find that it was so in many more. On one strange and painful scene his fancy was continually dwelling. In a gentle moment we have a dirge—

"The warm sun is failing, the bleak wind is wailing,
The bare boughs are sighing, the pale flowers are dying,
And the year
On the earth her deathbed, in a shroud of leaves, dead
Is lying.
Come months, come away,
From November to May,
In your saddest array:
Follow the bier
Of the dead cold year,
And like dim shadows watch by her sepulchre.

The chill rain is falling, the nipt worm is crawling,
The rivers are swelling, the thunder is knelling;
For the year
The blithe swallows are flown, and the lizards each gone
To his dwelling.
Come, months, come away;
Put on white, black, and gray;
Let your light sisters play—
Ye follow your bier
Of the dead cold year,
And make her grave green with tear on tear."

In a frenzied mood he breaks forth into wildness :

“ She is still, she is cold .
On the bridal couch ;
One step to the white deathbed,
And one to the bier,
And one to the charnel—and one, O, where ?
The dark arrow fled
In the noon.

Ere the sun through heaven once more has roll’d,
The rats in her heart
Will have made their nest,
And the worms be alive in her golden hair ;
While the spirit that guides the sun
Sits throned in his flaming chair,
She shall sleep.”

There is no doubt that these and a hundred other similar passages allude to the death of his first wife ; as melancholy a story as ever shivered the nerves of an excitable being. The facts are hardly known to us, but they are something like these : In very early youth Shelley had formed a half-fanciful attachment to a cousin, a Miss Harriett Grove, who is said to have been attractive, and to whom, certainly, his fancy often went back in later and distant years. How deep the feeling was on either side we do not know : she seems to have taken an interest in the hot singular dreams which occupied his mind—except only where her image might intrude—from which one might conjecture that she took unusual interest in him ; she even wrote some chapters, or parts of some, in one of his boyish novels, and her parents probably thought the “Rosierucian” could be endured as Shelley was the heir to land and a baronetcy. His expulsion from Oxford altered all this. Doubtless he had always in his family been thought “a singular young man,” and they had waited in perplexity to see if the oddness would turn to unusual good or unusual evil. His atheistic treatise and its results seemed to show clearly the latter, and all communication with Miss Grove was instantly forbidden him. What she felt on the subject is not told us ; probably some theistic and undreaming lover intervened, for she married in a short time. The despair of an excitable poet at being deprived of his mistress at the same moment that he was abandoned by his family, and in a measure by society, may be fancied, though it cannot be known. Captain Medwin observes : “Shelley, on this trying occasion, had the courage to live, in order that he might labour for one great object—the advancement of the human race and the amelioration of society ; and strengthened himself in a resolution to devote his energies to this ultimate end, being prepared to endure every obloquy, to make every sacrifice for its accomplishment ; and

would," such is the captain's English, "if necessary, have died in the cause." It does not appear, however, that disappointed love took solely the very unusual form of philanthropy. By chance, whether with or without leave does not appear, he went to see his second sister, who was at school at a place called Balam Hill, near London; and while walking in the garden with her, "a Miss Westbrook passed them." She was a "handsome blonde young lady, nearly sixteen;" and Shelley was much struck. He found out that her name was "Harriett,"—as he, after his marriage, anxiously expresses it, with two t's. Harriett and he fell in love at once. She had the name of his first love; "fairer, though yet the same." After his manner, he wrote to her immediately. He was in the habit of doing this to people who interested him, either in his own or under an assumed name: and once, Captain Medwin says, carried on a long correspondence with Mrs. Hemans, then Miss Browne, under his (the captain's) name; but which he, the deponent, was not permitted to peruse. In Miss Westbrook's case the correspondence had a more serious consequence. Of her character we can only guess a little. She was, we think, an ordinary blooming young lady of sixteen. Shelley was an extraordinary young man of nineteen, rather handsome, very animated, and expressing his admiration a little intensely. He was doubtless much the most aristocratic person she had ever spoken to; for her father was a retired innkeeper, and Shelley had always the air of a man of birth. There is a vision, too, of an elder sister, who made "Harriett dear" very uncomfortable. On the whole, the result may be guessed. At the end of August 1811, we do not know the precise day, they were married at Gretna Green. Jests may be made on it; but it was no laughing matter in the life of the wife or the husband. Of the lady's disposition and mind we know nothing except from Shelley; a medium which must, under the circumstances, be thought a distorting one. We should conclude that she was capable of making many people happy, though not of making Shelley happy. There is an ordinance of nature at which men of genius are perpetually fretting, but which does more good than many laws of the universe which they praise: it is, that ordinary women ordinarily prefer ordinary men. "Genius," as Hazlitt would have said, "puts them out." It is so strange; it does not come into the room as usual; it says "such things:" once it forgot to brush its hair. The common female mind prefers usual tastes, settled manners, customary conversation, defined and practical pursuits. And it is a great good that it should be so. Nature has no wiser instinct. The average woman can make happy the average man; good health, easy cheerfulness, common charms, suffice.

If Miss Westbrook had married an everyday person—a gentleman, suppose, in the tallow line—she would have been happy, and have made him happy. Her mind could have understood his life; her society would have been a gentle relief from unodorous pursuits. She had nothing in common with Shelley. His mind was full of eager thoughts, wild dreams, singular aspirations. The most delicate tact would probably have often failed, the nicest sensibility been jarred, the most entire affection erred, in dealing with such a being. A most peculiar character was required, to enter into such a rare union of curious qualities. Some eccentric men of genius have, indeed, felt, in the habitual tact and serene nothingness of ordinary women, a kind of trust and calm. They have admired an instinct of the world which they had not—a repose of mind they could not share. But this is commonly in later years. A boy of twenty thinks he knows the world; he is too proud and happy in his own eager and shifting thoughts to wish to contrast them with repose. The commonplaceness of life goads him: placid society irritates him. Bread is an incumbrance; upholstery tedious: he craves excitement; he wishes to reform mankind. You cannot convince him it is right to sew, in a world so full of sorrow and evil. Shelley was in this state; he hurried to and fro over England, pursuing theories, and absorbed in plans. He was deep in metaphysics; had subtle disproofs of all religion; wrote several poems, which would have been a puzzle to a very clever young lady. There were pecuniary difficulties besides: neither of the families had approved of the match, and neither were inclined to support the household. Altogether, no one can be surprised that in less than three years the hasty union ended in a “separation by mutual consent.” The wonder is that it lasted so long. What her conduct was after the separation, is not very clear; there were “reports” about her at Bath—perhaps a loquacious place. She was not twenty, probably handsome, and not improbably giddy: being quite without evidence, we cannot judge what was rumour and what was truth. Shelley has not left us in similar doubt. After a year or two he travelled abroad with Mary, afterwards the second Mrs. Shelley, the daughter of Mary Woolstoncroft and William Godwin—names most celebrated in those times, and even now known for their anti-matrimonial speculations. Of their “six weeks’ tour” abroad, in the year 1816, a record remains, and should be read by any persons who wish to learn what travelling was in its infancy. It was the year when the Continent was first thrown open to English travellers; and few probably adopted such singular means of locomotion as Shelley and his companions. First they tried walking, and had a very small ass to

carry their portmanteau; then they tried a mule; then a *fiacre*, which drove away from them; afterwards they came to a raft. It was not, however, an unamusing journey. At an ugly and out-of-the-way chateau, near Brunen, Shelley began a novel, to be called *The Assassins*, which he never finished—probably never continued—after his return; but which still remains, and is one of the most curious and characteristic specimens of his prose style. It was a refreshing intellectual tour; one of the most pleasant rambles of his life. On his return he was met by painful intelligence. His wife had destroyed herself. Of her state of mind we have no evidence. She is said to have been deeply affected by the “reports” to which we have alluded; but whatever it was, Shelley felt himself greatly to blame. He had been instrumental in first dividing her from her family; had connected himself with her in a wild contract, from which neither could ever be set free; if he had not crossed her path, she might have been happy in her own way and in her own sphere. All this preyed upon his mind, and it is said he became mad; and whether or not his horror and pain went the length of actual frenzy, they doubtless approached that border-line of suffering excitement which divides the most melancholy form of sanity from the most melancholy form of insanity. In several poems he seems to delineate himself in the guise of a maniac:

“‘Of his sad history

I know but this,’ said Maddalo; ‘he came
To Venice a dejected man, and fame
Said he was wealthy, or he had been so.
Some thought the loss of fortune wrought him woe;
But he was ever talking in such sort
As you do,—but more sadly:—he seem’d hurt,
Even as a man with his peculiar wrong,
To hear but of the oppression of the strong,
Or those absurd deceits (I think with you
In some respects, you know) which carry through
The excellent impostors of this earth
When they outface detection. He had worth,
Poor fellow! but a humorist in his way.’—
—‘Alas, what drove him mad?’

‘I cannot say:

A lady came with him from France; and when
She left him and returned, he wander’d then
About yon lonely isles of desert sand
Till he grew wild. He had no cash nor land
Remaining:—the police had brought him here—
Some fancy took him, and he would not bear
Removal, so I fitted up for him
Those rooms beside the sea, to please his whim;
And sent him busts, and books, and urns for flowers,
Which had adorned his life in happier hours,

And instruments of music. You may guess,
A stranger could do little more or less
For one so gentle and unfortunate—
And those are his sweet strains, which charm the weight
From madmen's chains, and make this hell appear
A heaven of sacred silence, hushed to hear.'

'Nay, this was kind of you ; he had no claim,
As the world says.'

'None but the very same
Which I on all mankind, were I, as he,
Fall'n to such deep reverse. His melody
Is interrupted now : we hear the din
Of madmen, shriek on shriek, again begin ;
Let us now visit him : after this strain
He ever communes with himself again,
And sees and hears not any.'

Having said
These words, we called the keeper ; and he led
To an apartment opening on the sea—
There the poor wretch was sitting mournfully
Near a piano, his pale fingers twined
One with the other ; and the ooze and wind
Rushed through an open casement, and did sway
His hair, and started it with the brackish spray :
His head was leaning on a music-book,
And he was muttering ; and his lean limbs shook ;
His lips were pressed against a folded leaf,
In hue too beautiful for health, and grief
Smiled in their motions as they lay apart,
As one who wrought from his own fervid heart
The eloquence of passion : soon he raised
His sad meek face, and eyes lustrous and glazed,
And spoke,—sometimes as one who wrote and thought
His words might move some heart that heeded not,
If sent to distant lands ;—and then as one
Reproaching deeds never to be undone,
With wondering self-compassion ; then his speech
Was lost in grief, and then his words came each
Unmodulated and expressionless,—
But that from one jarred accent you might guess
It was despair made them so uniform :
And all the while the loud and gusty storm
Hissed through the window ; and we stood behind,
Stealing his accents from the envious wind,
Unseen. I yet remember what he said
Distinctly—such impression his words made."

And casual illustrations—unconscious metaphors, showing a terrible familiarity—are borrowed from insanity in his subsequent works.

This strange story is in various ways deeply illustrative of his character. It shows how the impulsive temperament, not definitely intending evil, is hurried forward, so to say, *over* actions and crimes which would seem to indicate deep depravity,

—which would do so in ordinary human nature, but which do not indicate in it any thing like the same degree of guilt. Driven by singular passion across a tainted region, it retains no taint; on a sudden it passes through evil, but preserves its purity. So curious is this character, that a record of its actions may read like a libel on its life.

To some the story may also suggest whether Shelley's nature was one of those most adapted for love in its highest form. It is impossible to deny that he loved with a great intensity; yet it was with a certain narrowness, and therefore a certain fitfulness. Possibly a somewhat wider nature, taking hold of other characters at more points,—fascinated as intensely, but more variously,—stirred as deeply, but through more complicated emotions,—is requisite for the highest and most lasting feeling. Passion, to be enduring, must be many-sided. Eager and narrow emotions urge like the gadfly of the poet: but they pass away; they are single; there is nothing to revive them. Various as human nature must be the passion which absorbs that nature into itself. Shelley's mode of delineating women has a corresponding peculiarity. They are well described; but they are described under only one aspect. Every one of his poems almost has a lady whose arms are white, whose mind is sympathising, and whose soul is beautiful. She has many names—Cythna, Asia, Emily; but these are only external disguises; she is indubitably the same person, for her character never varies. No character can be simpler. She is described as the ideal object of love in its most simple and elemental form; the pure object of the essential passion. She is a being to be loved in a single moment, with eager eyes and gasping breath; but you feel that in that moment you have seen the whole. There is nothing to come to afterwards. The fascination is intense, but uniform. There is not the ever-varying grace, the ever-changing expression of the unchanging charm, that alone can attract for all time the shifting moods of a various and mutable nature.

The works of Shelley lie in a confused state, like the *dissecta membra* of the poet of our boyhood. They are in the strictest sense "remains." It is absurd to expect from a man who died at thirty a long work of perfected excellence. All which at so early an age can be expected are fine fragments, casual expressions of single inspirations. Of these Shelley has written some that are nearly, and one or two perhaps that are quite, perfect. But he has not done more. It would have been better if he had not attempted so much. He would have done well to have heeded Goethe's caution to Eckerman: "Beware of attempting a large work. If you have a great work in your head, nothing else thrives near it, all other thoughts are repelled, and

the pleasantness of life itself is for the time lost. What exertion and expenditure of mental force are required to arrange and round off a great whole; and then what powers, and what a tranquil undisturbed situation in life, to express it with the proper fluency! If you have erred as to the whole, all your toil is lost; and further, if, in treating so extensive a subject, you are not perfectly master of your material in the details, the whole will be defective, and censure will be incurred." Shelley did not know this. He was ever labouring at long poems: but he has left scarcely one which, as a whole, is worthy of him; you can point to none and say, This is Shelley. Even had he lived to an age of riper capacity, it may be doubted if a being so discontinuous, so easily hurried to and fro, would have possessed the settled, undeviating self-devotion that are necessary to a long and perfect composition. He had not, like Goethe, the cool shrewdness to watch for inspiration.

His success, as we have said, is in fragments; and the best of those fragments are lyrical. The very same isolation and suddenness of impulse which rendered him unfit for the composition of great works, rendered him peculiarly fit to pour forth on a sudden the intense essence of peculiar feeling "in profuse strains of unpremeditated art." Mr. Macaulay has said that the words "bard" and "inspiration," generally so meaningless when applied to modern poets, have a meaning when applied to Shelley. An idea, an emotion grew upon his brain; his breast heaved, his frame shook, his nerves quivered with the "harmonious madness" of imaginative concentration. "Poetry," he himself tells us, "is not, like reasoning, a power to be exerted according to the determination of the will. A man cannot say, 'I will compose poetry.' The greatest poet even cannot say it; for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness; this power arises from within, like the colour of a flower which fades and changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our natures are unprophetic either of its approach or its departure. . . . Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds. We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our own mind alone, and always arising unforeseen and departing unbidden, but elevating and delightful beyond all expression: so that even in the desire and the regret they leave, there cannot but be pleasure, participating as it does in the nature of its object. It is as if were the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own; but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose traces remain only, as, on the wrinkled

sand which paves it." In verse, Shelley has compared the skylark to a poet; we may turn back the description on his own art and his own mind:

" Keen are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow-clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

* * * * *

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace-tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower.

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aerial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view.

Like a rose embower'd
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflower'd,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass."

In most poets unearthly beings are introduced to express peculiar removed essences of lyrical rapture; but they are generally failures. Lord Byron tried this kind of composition in *Manfred*, and the result is an evident failure. In Shelley, such singing solitary beings are almost uniformly successful; while writing, his mind really for the moment was in the state in which theirs is supposed always to be. He loved attenuated ideas and abstract excitement. In expressing their nature he had but to set free his own.

Human nature is not, however, long equal to this sustained

effort of remote excitement. The impulse fails, imagination fades, inspiration dies away. With the skylark it is well:

“With thy clear keen joyance

Languor cannot be:

Shadow of annoyance

Never came near thee:

Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.”

But in unsoaring human nature languor comes, fatigue palls, melancholy oppresses, melody dies away. The universe is not all blue sky; there is the thick fog and the heavy earth. “The world,” says Mr. Emerson, “is mundane.” A creeping sense of weight is part of the most aspiring nature. To the most thrilling rapture succeeds despondency, perhaps pain. To Shelley this was peculiarly natural. His dreams of reform, of a world which was to be, called up the imaginative ecstasy; his soul bounded forward into the future; but it is not possible even to the most abstracted and excited mind to place its happiness in the expected realisation of impossible schemes, and yet not occasionally be uncertain of those schemes. The rigid frame of society, the heavy heap of traditional institutions, the solid slowness of ordinary humanity, depress the aspiring fancy. “Since our fathers fell asleep all things continued as they were from the beginning.” Occasionally we must think of our fathers. No man can always dream of ever altering all which is. It is characteristic of Shelley, that at the end of his most rapturous and sanguine lyrics there intrudes the cold consciousness of this world. So with his Grecian dreams:

“A brighter Hellas rears its mountains

From waves serener far;

A new Peneus rolls its fountains

Against the morning-star.

Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep

Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep;

A loftier Argos cleaves the main,

Fraught with a later prize;

Another Orpheus sings again,

And loves, and weeps, and dies:

A new Ulysses leaves once more,

Calypso for his native shore.”

But he ends:

“O, cease! must hate and death return?

Cease! must men kill and die?

Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn

Of bitter prophecy.

The world is weary of the past—

O, might it die or rest at last!”

In many of his poems the failing of the feeling is as beautiful as its short moment of hope and buoyancy.

The excellence of Shelley does not, however, extend equally

over the whole domain of lyrical poetry. That species of art may be divided—not perhaps with the accuracy of science, but with enough for the rough purposes of popular criticism—into the human and the abstract. The sphere of the former is of course the actual life, passions, and actions of real men,—such are the war-songs of rude nations especially; in that early age there is no subject for art but natural life and primitive passion. In a later time, when from the deposit of the *débris* of a hundred philosophies, a large number of half-personified abstractions are part of the familiar thoughts and language of all mankind, there are new objects to excite the feelings,—we might even say there are new feelings to be excited; the rough substance of original passion is sublimated and attenuated till we hardly recognise its identity. Ordinarily and in most minds the emotion loses in this process its intensity, or much of it; but this is not universal. In some peculiar minds it is possible to find an almost dizzy intensity of excitement called forth by some fancied abstraction remote altogether from the eyes and senses of men. The love-lyric in its simplest form is probably the most intense expression of primitive passion; yet not in those lyrics where such intensity is the greatest,—in those of Burns, for example,—is the passion so dizzy, bewildering, and bewildered, as in the “Epipsy-chidion” of Shelley, the passion of which never came into the real world at all, was only a fiction founded on fact, and was wholly—and even Shelley felt it—inconsistent with the inevitable conditions of ordinary existence. In this point of view, and especially also taking account of his peculiar religious opinions, it is remarkable that Shelley should have taken extreme delight in the Bible as a composition. He is the least biblical of poets. The whole, inevitable, essential conditions of real life—the whole of its plain, natural joys and sorrows—are described in the Jewish literature as they are described no where else. Very often they are assumed rather than delineated; and the brief assumption is more effective than the most elaborate description. There is none of the delicate sentiment and enhancing sympathy which a modern writer would think necessary; the inexorable facts are dwelt on with a stern humanity which recognises human feeling though intent on something above it. Of all modern poets, Wordsworth shares the most in this peculiarity; perhaps he is the only recent one who has it at all. He knew the hills beneath whose shade “the generations are prepared:”

“Much did he see of men,
 Their passions and their feelings: chiefly those
 Essential and eternal in the heart,
 That mid the simple form of rural life
 Exist more simple in their elements,
 And speak a plainer language.”

Shelley has nothing of this. The essential feelings he hoped to change; the eternal facts he struggled to remove. Nothing in human life to him was inevitable or fixed; he fancied he could alter it all. His sphere is the "unconditioned;" he floats away into an imaginary elysium or an expected utopia; beautiful and excellent of course, but having nothing in common with the absolute laws of the present world. Even in the description of mere nature the difference may be noted. Wordsworth describes this earth as we know it, with all its peculiarities; where there are moors and hills, where the lichen grows, where the slate-rock juts out. Shelley describes the universe. He rushes away among the stars; this earth is an assortment of imagery, he uses it to deck some unknown planet. He scorns "the smallest light that twinkles in the heavens." His theme is the vast, the infinite, the immeasurable. He is not of our home, nor homely; he describes not our world, but that which is common to all worlds—the Platonic idea of a world. Where it can, his genius soars from the concrete and real into the unknown, the indefinite, and the void.

Shelley's success in the abstract lyric would prepare us for expecting that he would fail in attempts at eloquence. The mind which bursts forward of itself into the inane, is not likely to be eminent in the composed adjustments of measured persuasion. A voluntary self-control is necessary to the orator—even when he declaims, he must only let himself go; a keen will must be ready, a wakeful attention at hand, to see that he does not say a word by which his audience will not be touched. The eloquence of "Queen Mab" is of that unpersuasive kind which is admired in the earliest youth, when things and life are unknown, when all that is intelligible is the sound of words.

Mr. Macaulay, in a passage to which we have referred already, speaks of Shelley as having, more than any other poet, many of the qualities of the great old masters; two of these he has especially. In the first place, his imagination is classical rather than romantic:—we should, perhaps, apologise for using words which have been used so often, but which hardly convey even yet a clear and distinct meaning; yet they seem the best for conveying a distinction of this sort. When we attempt to distinguish the imagination from the fancy, we find that they are often related as a beginning to an ending. On a sudden we do not know how a new image, form, idea, occurs to our minds; sometimes it is borne in upon us with a flash, sometimes we seem unawares to stumble upon it, and find it as if it had long been there: in either case the involuntary unanticipated appearance of this new thought or image is a primitive fact which we cannot analyse or account for. We say it originated in our imagination or creative faculty; but this is a mere

expression of the completeness of our ignorance; we could only define the imagination as the faculty which produces such effects; we know nothing of it or its constitution. Again, on this original idea a large number of accessory and auxiliary ideas seem to grow or accumulate insensibly, casually, and without our intentional effort; the bare primitive form attracts a clothing of delicate materials—an adornment not altering its essence, but enhancing its effect. This we call the work of the fancy. An exquisite delicacy in appropriating fitting accessories is as much the characteristic excellence of a fanciful mind, as the possession of large, simple, bold ideas is of an imaginative one. The last is immediate; the first comes minute by minute; the distinction is like what one fancies between sculpture and painting. If we look at a delicate statue—a Venus or Juno—it does not suggest any slow elaborate process by which its expression was chiselled and its limbs refined; it seems a simple fact: we look, and require no account of it; it exists. The greatest painting suggests, not only a creative act, but a decorative process: day by day there was something new; we could watch the tints laid on, the dresses tinged, the perspective growing and growing. There is something statuesque about the imagination; there is the gradual complexity of painting in the most exquisite productions of the fancy. When we speak of this distinction, we seem almost to be speaking of the distinction between ancient and modern literature. The characteristic of the classical literature is the simplicity with which the imagination appears in it; that of modern literature is the profusion with which the most various adornments of the accessory fancy are thrown and lavished upon it. Perhaps no where is this more conspicuous than in the modern treatment of antique subjects. One of the most essentially modern of recent poets has an “Ode to a Grecian Urn:” it begins—

“Thou still unravish’d bride of quietness!
 Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
 Sylvan historian! who canst thus express
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
 What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
 Of deities or mortals, or of both,
 In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
 What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
 What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
 What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?”

No ancient poet would have dreamed of writing thus. There would have been no indistinct shadowy warmth, no breath of surrounding beauty: his delineation would have been cold, distinct, chiselled like the urn itself. The use which such a poet as Keats makes of ancient mythology is exactly similar. He

owes his fame to the inexplicable art with which he has breathed a soft tint over the marble forms of gods and goddesses, enhancing their beauty without impairing their chasteness. This kind of imagination is not peculiar to a mythological age. The growth of civilisation, at least in Greece, rather increased than diminished the imaginative bareness of the poetical art. It seems to attain its height in Sophocles. If we examine any of his greater passages, a principal beauty is their reserved simplicity. A modern reader almost necessarily uses them as materials for fancy: we are too used to little circumstance to be able to do without it. Take the passage in which *Cedipus* contrasts the conduct of his sons with that of his daughters:

ὦ πάντ' ἐκείνω τοῖς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ νόμοις
φύσιν κατεικασθέντε καὶ βίον τροφάς.
ἐκεῖ γὰρ οἱ μὲν ἄρσενες κατὰ στέγας
θακοῦσιν ἰστουργοῦντες, αἱ δὲ σύννομοι
τάξω βίον τροφείᾳ πορσύνουσ' αἰεὶ.
σφῶν δ', ὦ τέκν', οὐς μὲν εἰκὸς ἦν πονεῖν τάδε,
κατ' οἶκον οἰκουροῦσιν ὥστε παρθένοι,
σφῶ δ' ἀντ' ἐκείνων τὰμῶν δυστήνον κακὰ
ὑπερπονεῖτον. ἡ μὲν ἐξ ὅτου νέας
τροφῆς ἔληξε καὶ κατίσχυσεν δέμας,
αἰεὶ μεθ' ἡμῶν δύσμορος πλανωμένη
γερονταγωγεῖ, πολλὰ μὲν κατ' ἀγρίαν
ῥῆλιν ἄσιτος νηλίπους τ' ἄλωμένη,
πολλοῖσι δ' ὄμβροις ἡλίου τε καύμασιν
μοχθοῦσα τλήμων, δεύτερ' ἡγεῖται τὰ τῆς
οἴκοι δαίτης, εἰ πατὴρ τροφὴν ἔχοι.

What a contrast to the ravings of Lear! What a world of detail Shakespeare would have put into the passage! What talk of "sulphurous and thought-executing fires," "simulacra of virtue," "pent-up guilts," and "the thick rotundity of the world"! "*Decorum* is the principal thing" in Sophocles. The conception of *Cedipus* is not

"Crowned with rank fumiter and furrow weeds,
With harlocks, hemlock, nettle, and cuckoo-flowers."

There are no "idle weeds" among the "sustaining corn." The conception of Lear is that of an old gnarled oak, gaunt and quivering in the stormy sky, with old leaves and withered branches tossing in the air, and all the complex growth of a hundred years creaking and nodding to its fall. That of *Cedipus* is the peak of Teneriffe, as we fancied it in our childhood, by itself and snowy, above among the stormy clouds, heedless of the angry winds and the desolate waves,—single, ascending, and alone. Or, to change the metaphor to one derived from an art where the same qualities of mind have produced kindred effects, ancient

poetry is like a Grecian temple, with pure form and rising columns,—created, one fancies, by a single effort of a creative nature: modern literature seems to have sprung from the involved brain of a Gothic architect, and resembles a huge cathedral—the work of the perpetual industry of centuries—complicated and infinite in details; but by their choice and elaboration producing an effect of unity which is not inferior to that of the other, and is heightened by the multiplicity through which it is conveyed. And it seems to be this warmth of circumstance—which this profusion of interesting detail—which has caused the name ‘romantic’ to be perseveringly applied to modern literature.

It is only necessary to open Shelley, to show how essentially classical in its highest efforts his art is. Indeed, although nothing can be further removed from the staple topics of the classical writers than the abstract lyric, yet their treatment is nearly essential to it. We have said, its sphere is in what the Germans call the unconditioned—in the unknown, immeasurable, and untrodden. It follows from this that we cannot know much about it. We cannot know detail in tracts we have never visited; the infinite has no form; the immeasurable no outline: that which is common to all worlds is simple. There is therefore no scope for the accessory fancy. With a single soaring effort imagination may reach her end: if she fail, no fancy can help her; if she succeed, there will be no petty accumulations of insensible circumstance in a region far above all things. Shelley’s excellence in the abstract lyric is almost another phrase for the simplicity of his impulsive imagination.—He shows it on other subjects also. We have spoken of his bare treatment of the ancient mythology. It is the same with his treatment of nature. In the description of the celestial regions quoted before—one of the most characteristic passages in his writings—the details are few, the air thin, the lights distinct. We are conscious of an essential difference if we compare the “Ode to the Nightingale” in Keats, for instance—such verses as

“ I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs;
 But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild,
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine,
 Fast-fading violets cover’d up in leaves,
 And mid-May’s eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.
 Darkling I listen; and for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful death,
 Call’d him soft names in many a musèd rhyme,
 To take into the air my quiet breath;

Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy.
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod."

—with the conclusion of the "Ode to the Skylark"—

"Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,—
I know not how thy joy we ever could come near.
Better than all measures
Of delight and sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!
Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know;
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now."

We can hear that the poetry of Keats is a rich, composite, voluptuous harmony; that of Shelley a clear single ring of penetrating melody.

Of course, however, this criticism requires limitation. There is an obvious sense in which Shelley is a fanciful, as contradistinguished from an imaginative, poet. These words, being invented for the popular expression of differences which can be remarked without narrow inspection, are apt to mislead us when we apply them to the exact results of a near and critical analysis. Besides the use of the word "fancy" to denote the power which adorns and amplifies the product of the primitive imagination, we also employ it to denote the weaker exercise of the faculty which itself creates those elementary products. We use the word "imaginative" only for strong, vast, imposing, interesting conceptions: we use the word "fanciful" when we have to speak of smaller and weaker creations, which amaze us less at the moment and affect us more slightly afterwards. Of course, metaphysically speaking, it is not likely that there will be found to be any distinction; the faculty which creates the most attractive ideas is doubtless the same as that which creates the less attractive. Common language marks the distinction, because common people are impressed by the contrast between what affects them much and what affects them little; but it is no evidence of the entire difference of the latent agencies. Speech, as usual, refers to sensations, and not to occult causes. Of fancies of this sort Shelley is full: whole poems—as the "Witch of Atlas"—are composed of nothing else. Living a

good deal in, and writing a great deal about, the abstract world, it was inevitable that he should often deal in fine subtleties, affecting very little the concrete hearts of real men. Many pages of his are, in consequence, nearly unintelligible, even to good critics of common poetry. The air is too rarefied for hardy and healthy lungs: these like, as Lord Bacon expressed it, "to work upon stuff." From his habitual choice of slight and airy subjects, Shelley may be called a fanciful, as opposed to an imaginative, poet; from his bare delineations of great objects, his keen expression of distinct impulses, he should be termed an imaginative, rather than a fanciful, one.

Some of this odd combination of qualities Shelley doubtless owed to the structure of his senses. By one of those singular results which constantly meet us in metaphysical inquiry, the imagination and fancy are singularly influenced by the bodily sensibility. One might have fancied that the faculty by which the soul soars into the infinite, and sees what it cannot see with the eye of the body, would have been peculiarly independent of that body. But the reverse is the case. Vividness of sensation seems required to awaken, delicacy to define, copiousness to enrich, the visionary faculty. A large experience proves that a being who is blind to this world will be blind to the other; that a coarse expectation of what is not seen will follow from a coarse perception of what is seen. Shelley's sensibility was vivid, but peculiar. Hazlitt used to say, "he had seen him; and did not like his looks." He had the thin keen excitement of the fanatic student; not the broad, natural, enjoying energy which Hazlitt expected from a poet. The diffused life of genial enjoyment, which was common to Scott and to Shakespeare, was quite out of his way. Like Mr. Emerson, he would have wondered they could be content with a "mean and jocular life." In consequence, there is no varied imagery from human life in his poetry. He was an abstract student, anxious about deep philosophies; and he had not that settled, contemplative, allotted acquaintance with external nature which is so curious in Milton, the greatest of studious poets. The exact opposite, however, to Shelley, in the nature of his sensibility, is Keats. That great poet used to pepper his tongue, "to enjoy in all its grandeur the cool flavour of delicious claret." When you know it, you seem to read it in his poetry. There is the same luxurious sentiment; the same poise on fine sensation. Shelley was the reverse of this; he was a water-drinker; his verse runs quick and chill, like a pure crystal stream. The sensibility of Keats was attracted too by the spectacle of the universe; he could not keep his eye from seeing, or his ears from hearing, the glories of it. All the beautiful objects of nature reappear by name in his poetry. The abstract idea of beauty is

for ever celebrated in Shelley; it haunted his soul. But it was independent of special things; it was the general surface of beauty which lies upon all things. It was the smile of the universe and the expression of the world; it was not the vision of a land of corn and wine. The nerves of Shelley quivered at the idea of loveliness; but no coarse sensation obtruded particular objects upon him. He was left to himself with books and reflection.

So far, indeed, from Shelley having a peculiar tendency to dwell on and prolong the sensation of pleasure, he has a perverse tendency to draw out into lingering keenness the torture of agony. Of his common recurrence to the dizzy pain of mania we have formerly spoken; but this is not the only pain. The nightshade is commoner in his poems than the daisy. The nerve is ever laid bare; as often as it touches the open air of the real world, it quivers with subtle pain. The high intellectual impulses which animated him are too incorporeal for human nature; they begin in buoyant joy, they end in eager suffering.

In style, said Mr. Wordsworth—in workmanship, we think his expression was—Shelley is one of the best of us. This too, we think, was the second of the peculiarities to which Mr. Macaulay referred when he said that Shelley had, more than any recent poet, some of the qualities of the great old masters. The peculiarity of his style is its intellectuality; and this strikes us the more from its contrast with his impulsiveness. He had something of this in life. Hurried away by sudden desires as he was in his choice of ends, we are struck with a certain comparative measure and adjustment in his choice of means. So in his writings: over the most intense excitement, the grandest objects, the keenest agony, the most buoyant joy, he throws an air of subtle mind. His language is minutely and acutely searching; at the dizziest height of meaning the keenness of the words is greatest. As in mania, so in his descriptions of it, the acuteness of the mind seems to survive the mind itself. It was from Plato and Sophocles, doubtless, that he gained the last perfection in preserving the accuracy of the intellect when treating of the objects of the imagination; but in its essence it was a peculiarity of his own nature. As it was the instinct of Byron to give in glaring words the gross phenomena of evident objects, so it was that of Shelley to refine the most inscrutable with the curious nicety of an attenuating metaphysician. In the wildest of ecstasies his self-anatomising intellect is equal to itself.

There is much more which might be said, and which ought to be said, of Shelley; but our limits are reached. We have not attempted a complete criticism; we have only aimed to show how some of the peculiarities of his works and life may be traced to the peculiarity of his nature.

ART. V.—DE FOE AS A NOVELIST.

Bohn's British Classics. De Foe's Works. Vols. I.-IV. London, Henry G. Bohn. 1854, 1855.

THE modern novel is the characteristic literature of modern times. It is not difficult to detect some of the leading sources of its growth in the conditions and tendencies of modern society, especially in England. Increase of personal liberty has given increased scope and a greater common importance to individual life and character. A diminishing political and social restraint over men's lives, and a less urgent necessity for active personal engagement in political affairs, combined with a less formal and exigent code of manners in society, have endowed men with both more room and more leisure for the conscious determination of their own lives and characters. The sphere of human duty is not less wide and important than it used to be: but it is more voluntary—less under the law; its claims are less engrossing and less exacting; the relations to God are less distracted—less mediate—more comprehensive. A man may either live that he may act in a certain way, or he may so act that he may live a certain life and be a certain sort of thing. The facilities for the latter arrangement of existence are probably greater now in England than they have ever hitherto been in the world; and the effects of a growing tendency in this direction are visible enough in our literature. An increased interest in our own characters has naturally given us an increased interest in the individual characters of others; and the examination and representation of character has been the most universal object of modern imaginative literature, its most special characteristic, and its highest excellence. The limits of the drama have not sufficed for its wants: it requires to display not only statical forms of character, but its development under the most varied and protracted circumstances; and an intimate union of the dramatic and narrative modes of delineation has been contrived, to give scope to the new requirements of art. The same tendencies may be observed in other sorts of writing. They have somewhat warped history from its true model and objects, and they have given a higher and truer character to biography. The distinguishing use of history lies in the light it throws on the political and social nature of man. Its lessons are for the statesman and the citizen. It investigates, or should do, the principles of common human action in communities, and furnishes its students with comprehensive grounds for judging the

tendencies and estimating the value of legislative changes. Its function is to supply men with guiding knowledge in their capacity as the members of a state. The object of biography is, or should be, to furnish, as complete as possible a view of the whole character and life of its subject, both for its own interest, and as making additions to that sort of knowledge of individual men which may subserve others in moulding their own individual lives and characters. Modern history, as we might expect, tends too much to become biographical in its character; while biography is far less content than it used to be with stringing together the events of a man's life, and aims at as searching as possible an examination and exhibition of the whole nature of the man. The same reasons that have tended to make character a more universal subject of study have also tended to give it a form which has made newer and more exhaustive methods of treating it more necessary for its exhibition. There are fewer sharp diversities in character than there used to be. Men differ, not less completely, but less prominently, than they used to do: there is less one-sided individual development. When men are sharply constrained by an external power, which can grasp only a part of their nature, the very pressure there will make other parts of their nature start out in strange and abnormal excrescences. The more external restraint is removed, the more rounded and the more alike in their general aspects will be the forms of the single particles which together constitute society: differences of character become less apparent on the surface, and a finer discrimination, a more comprehensive insight, and a more delicate expression, are necessary to delineate its diversities.

Modern taste, accustomed to this more refined school of art, finds little to gratify it in the novels of De Foe. Neither his own genius nor that of his times was favourable to a compliance with its more recondite demands. The reigns of William and of Anne were any thing rather than adapted for the unhampered growth and quiet contemplation of character. They were filled with restless petty action. The liberties of the nation itself had been secured; but the respective rights and claims of the several parties within the nation were never more undecided. It was a time of discord and jangling. Arbitrary invasions on the general liberty of the subject were replaced by harassing restrictions on the free action of certain classes; and dangers important enough to unite the mass of the people in resistance had been replaced by a petty tyranny of disqualifications and fines over discordant minorities, which led an anxious life of mixed warfare and occasional conformity. In such times measures were more interesting than men, events occupied attention more than the study of cha-

racter. And in such a time the natural bent of De Foe's genius to occupy itself with action and practical affairs was thoroughly confirmed by a long life of thankless political effort, conducted from so independent a point of view as to expose him to the persecution of both the great parties of the day.

Human existence, in all its varied forms and conditions, was the one thing which interested him: but he busied himself rather with what men were doing than with what they were; with how they influenced the external world, rather than with how the external world influenced them. The modes of human life had a curious fascination for him. The way in which people lived and did things, and other imagined ways in which they might live and do the same or other things, were the matters which occupied his attention. The administration of affairs, the conduct of wars, the management of trade, the control of a household,—these were his favourite objects of contemplation. Great or small, they pleased him alike. The main labours, on which he spent nearly forty years of his life, were works of survey and practical suggestion in political and social affairs, often the most intricate and important; but he could turn with equal relish to discuss the "pride, insolence, and exorbitant wages of our women-servants" (though "they were pleased to say he undervalued himself to take notice of them"), and to make "proposals for the amendment of the same." Even the most private and delicate arcana of domestic life were not too sacred to escape his curious observation and didactic suggestions.

His novels set forth not so much the life of a particular person as some particular mode of life. They tell us something that happened, or how things happened. Often the hero is a mere mouth-piece for a mass of adventures, told for their *own* sakes, and carrying their interest entirely in themselves, not deriving any from the light they throw on the supposititious narrator. The *Memoirs of a Cavalier* is De Foe's notion of how the civil wars were carried on. *Captain Carleton* is only a device to tell us what he knows of some of the Low-Country campaigns, of Spain, and of Lord Peterborough's exploits there; and the *History of the Plague* is interesting as history, not as a personal narrative. Of these sort of things one asks, as the children do, "But is it all true?" It professes to be so; every artifice is resorted to to make us believe it authentic; and there can be no doubt that De Foe deliberately intended to pass these narratives off upon the world as literally true, and to obtain the advantage of the interest so excited. But as soon as you get to learn that they are not authentic their main interest is gone. The great mass of the facts may be true, but you have not the slightest clue to enable you to distinguish between the truth and falsehood of any of the minor and

characteristic details: we can be sure only of those broad facts which we know to be true from other sources. In the whole range of imaginative literature there is nothing less satisfactory and more useless than this inextricable mingling of truths and figments. It is not history; it is not fiction. Where, as in Sir Walter Scott, you have an imaginative central interest confessedly fictitious, for which the real facts of history are used to afford a field, their own interest being only a subsidiary one, there, though the historical view may be distorted, and the facts inaccurate, they still have their true artistic bearing. There is a story; and if that be good, we care comparatively little whether the historic material be in strict accordance with fact. We know Cromwell was not as he is represented in *Woodstock*; the *Talisman* probably contains a not very correct view of Richard Cœur de Lion; and one would not be willing implicitly to accept all Sir Walter's views of parties and characters in Scottish history; but we don't read him for history, and we willingly accept for the time any view of historic personages which, without being glaringly inaccurate, subserves the interests of his romances. Where, on the other hand, a writer forms his own distinct conception of an historic personage or event, basing it on knowledge, and making it as true to the reality as he can, he may legitimately, perhaps, give play to his fancy in inventing minor incidents and traits for the purpose of reproducing his conception in a work of art with greater vividness and completeness than he could possibly do, were he to confine himself to the bare ascertained facts. If a man is writing history or biography, such a latitude is clearly not to be tolerated, though often taken; but such romances as *Harold* and *Rienzi* are doubtless permissible. When we peruse them, we lean on the author, and trust him just as far as we choose; and we know ourselves to be reading, not history, but the impression history has left on a man of genius. But when a man bases the interest of his narrative on a mass of minute details about the real affairs of the world, professedly gathered by an eye-witness, the pleasure you derive from it is founded on the belief you have in its exact truth; and as soon as you find that the Cavalier who gives you the benefit of his personal experiences was really a tradesman in London of a generation later, the book loses its value. The element of invention destroys the interest you would have had in it as a record of fact, and the inextricable element of real fact destroys your pleasure in the invention. You wonder at it, and are perplexed in the perusal; if it retains any interest at all, it is due to the measure of probability that in the main it is still true.

And in De Foe's case this probability is very strong. His intense love for facts, and his very accurate and comprehensive

knowledge and wide experience of the world of men, made him of all writers the one most able to give a true picture of, or at any rate a collection of true incidents relating to, any of the events either of his own times or of those sufficiently close to survive in the memory of the actors or their immediate descendants. On the other hand, his love of invention, his skill in giving the exactest air of reality to his fancied incidents, and his utter want of scruple in palming them off as truths, leave it quite uncertain in what proportion such narratives as the *History of the Plague* consist of real incidents, and in what of manufactured ones so closely resembling the others as not to be distinguishable from them by any test we now have it in our power to apply. Once resigning yourself to this inevitable confusion of truth and fiction, or rather consoling yourself with the reflection that De Foe's inventions are in such close harmony with the facts that surround them, that we may almost accept the whole as true, and the graphic, matter-of-fact, direct, unadorned narrative has an irresistible charm. It is admirably adapted for the history of such an event as the Plague, whose reality leaves the uninformed imagination behind, whose facts are more strange and frightful than the fancy, unaided by a knowledge of the reality, could ever have summoned up. In such cases, the plain bare recital of things just as they actually happened, has a tragic power superior to any that genius, except perhaps of the very highest order, could confer upon them. We are comparatively familiar with the horrors of the time and its terrors; with Solomon Eagle, with his pan of burning coals on his head, "denouncing of judgment upon the city in a frightful manner;" and with the clergyman who went every evening through Whitechapel streets, repeating continually that passage from the Liturgy, "Spare us, good Lord; spare thy people whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood." We have heard "the fatal bellman," and the rumble of the dead-cart through the darkness thick with pestilence; have stood at the edge of the horrid pit, with its row of candles round it, and its busy and desperate buriers; have seen the dead encumbering the highway, and the dying bursting like frantic ghosts from the imprisonment of their houses;—but to give an impression of quiet desolation, we know nothing like De Foe's account of the solitary waterman, left alone among his dead neighbours, and labouring for the support of his stricken wife and family.

"Much about the same time I walked out into the fields towards Bow; for I had a great mind to see how things were managed in the river, and among the ships; and as I had some concern in shipping, I had a notion that it had been one of the best ways of securing oneself from the infection to have retired into a ship. And musing how to

satisfy my curiosity in that point, I turned away over the fields, from Bow to Bromley, and down to Blackwall, to the stairs that are there for landing or taking water.

Here I saw a poor man walking on the bank or sea-wall, as they call it, by himself. I walked awhile also about, seeing the houses all shut up; at last I fell into some talk, at a distance, with this poor man. First I asked how people did thereabouts. 'Alas! sir,' says he, 'almost desolate,—all dead or sick; here are very few families in this part, or in that village,' pointing at Poplar, 'where half of them are not dead already, and the rest sick.' Then he, pointing to one house, 'They are all dead,' said he; 'and the house stands open, nobody dares go into it. A poor thief,' says he, 'ventured in to steal something; but he paid dear for his theft, for he was carried to the churchyard too, last night.' Then he pointed to several other houses. 'There,' says he, 'they are all dead, the man and his wife and five children. There,' says he, 'they are shut up, you see a watchman at the door;' and so of other houses. 'Why,' says I, 'what do you here all alone?' 'Why,' says he, 'I am a poor desolate man; it hath pleased God I am not yet visited, though my family is, and one of my children dead.' 'How do you mean, then,' said I, 'that you are not visited?' 'Why,' says he, 'that is my house,' pointing to a very low boarded house, 'and there my poor wife and two children live,' said he, 'if they may be said to live, for my wife and one of the children are visited; but I do not come at them.' And with that word I saw the tears run very plentifully down his face; and so they did down mine too, I assure you.

'But,' said I, 'why do you not come at them? How can you abandon your own flesh and blood?' 'O, sir,' says he, 'the Lord forbid; I do not abandon them, I work for them as much as I am able; and, blessed be the Lord, I keep them from want.' And with that I observed he lifted up his eyes to heaven with a countenance that presently told me I had happened on a man that was no hypocrite, but a serious, religious, good man; and his ejaculation was an expression of thankfulness, that, in such a condition as he was in, he should be able to say his family did not want. 'Well,' says I, 'honest man, that is a great mercy, as things go now with the poor. But how do you live, then; and how are you kept from the dreadful calamity that is now upon us all?' 'Why, sir,' says he, 'I am a waterman, and there is my boat,' says he, 'and the boat serves me for a house; I work in it in the day, and I sleep in it in the night; and what I get I lay it down upon that stone,' says he, showing me a broad stone on the other side of the street, a good way from his house; 'and then,' says he, 'I halloo and call to them till I make them hear, and they come and fetch it.'

'Well, friend,' says I, 'but how can you get money as a waterman? Does any body go by water these times?' 'Yes, sir,' says he, 'in the way I am employed there does. Do you see there,' says he, 'five ships lie at anchor?' pointing down the river a good way below the town; 'and do you see,' says he, 'eight or ten ships lie at the chain there, and at anchor yonder?' pointing above the town. 'All those ships

have families on board, of their merchants and owners and such-like, who have locked themselves up, and live on board, close shut in, for fear of the infection ; and I tend on them, to fetch things for them, carry letters, and do what is absolutely necessary, that they may not be obliged to come on shore ; and every night I fasten my boat on board one of the ship's boats, and there I sleep by myself ; and, blessed be God, I am preserved hitherto.'

'Well,' said I, 'friend, but will they let you come on board after you have been on shore here, when this has been such a terrible place, and so infected as it is ?'

'Why, as to that,' said he, 'I very seldom go up the ship-side, but deliver what I bring to their boat, or lie by the side, and they hoist it on board ; if I did, I think they are in no danger from me, for I never go into any house on shore, or touch any body, no, not of my own family ; but I fetch provisions for them.'

'Nay,' says I, 'but that may be worse, for you must have those provisions of somebody or other ; and since all this part of the town is so infected, it is dangerous so much as to speak with any body ; for the village,' said I, 'is as it were the beginning of London, though it be at some distance from it.'

'That is true,' added he ; 'but you do not understand me right. I do not buy provisions for them here, I row up to Greenwich, and buy fresh meat there ; and sometimes I row down the river to Woolwich, and buy there ; then I go to single farm-houses on the Kentish side, where I am known, and buy fowls, and eggs, and butter, and bring to the ships as they direct me, sometimes one, sometimes the other. I seldom come on shore here ; and I came only now to call my wife, and hear how my little family do, and give them a little money which I received last night.'

'Poor man,' said I ; 'and how much hast thou gotten for them ?'

'I have gotten four shillings,' said he, 'which is a great sum, as things go now with poor men ; but they have given me a bag of bread too, and a salt fish, and some flesh ; so all helps out.'

'Well,' said I, 'and have you given it them yet ?'

'No,' said he ; 'but I have called, and my wife has answered that she cannot come out yet, but in half an hour she hopes to come, and I am waiting for her. Poor woman !' says he, 'she is brought sadly down ; she has had a swelling, and it is broke, and I hope she will recover, but I fear the child will die ; but it is the Lord !—Here he stopped, and wept very much.

'Well, honest friend,' said I, 'thou hast a sure comforter, if thou hast brought thyself to be resigned to the will of God ; He is dealing with us all in judgment.'

'O, sir,' says he, 'it is infinite mercy if any of us are spared ; and who am I to repine ?'

'Sayest thou so ?' said I ; 'and how much less is my faith than thine !' And here my heart smote me, suggesting how much better this poor man's foundation was, on which he stayed in the danger, than mine ; that he had nowhere to fly ; that he had a family to bind him to at-

tendance, which I had not. And mine was mere presumption, his a true dependence, and a courage resting on God ; and yet, that he used all possible caution for his safety.

I turned a little way from the man, while these thoughts engaged me ; for, indeed, I could no more refrain from tears than he."

Something similar to these quasi-historical pieces are such works as *Captain Singleton*, and the *New Voyage round the World* ; but they differ from them in their interest lying in the invention displayed in fictitious narrative, to which a basis only of reality is given ; and though the boundary which divides the two is as much obscured as possible, they are sufficiently distinguishable in the main ; and while we look on the curious incidental revelations as to the trade in the Spanish seas and South-American settlements as no doubt embodying reliable information of its kind, and on the general picture of Singleton's career as giving us some insight (gathered probably from De Foe's confabulations with old Dampier, with whom he used to talk over these matters) into the sea-life of the times, we are not in danger of being misled to believe in those pearl-gatherings in undiscovered and undiscoverable South-Sea islands, or that marvellous journey across the continent of Africa.

The proper novels of De Foe—*Roxana*, *Moll Flanders*, *Colonel Jack*, and above all, the first part of *Robinson Crusoe*—are of a much higher class. They are pure fictions ; any elements of fact which may be included in them being, as it were, entirely dissolved and incorporated in a homogeneous work of imagination. The most marked feature in them, the one which first strikes every reader that looks at them, is their reality, their life-likeness. Perhaps this quality would have been less remarked had it been more balanced by other qualities more or less common in works of fiction. As it is, it stands sharply out as the characteristic of De Foe, and is the index to a genius not more remarkable for its wonderful power in this direction than it is for its absolute deficiencies in another. No where else does our literature show the trace of an imagination at once so vivid and so curiously limited. It is as if he had just one-half of that faculty we commonly call by this name. The imagination of Shakespeare is a universal solvent ; at its touch the combined elements in man and circumstance fly apart, and reveal their secret and innermost constituent nature. This analytical power of genius,—a power, however, not of reasoning, but of insight,—furnishes the reservoir from which spring the fountains of creative genius ; the more piercing that power, the clearer, the deeper, the more shining will be the knowledge it amasses, and thence the more fresh, the more vivid, the more true the creations that are informed by it. With this searching insight, dividing

like a sword the spirit and body of things, a great poet unites a passionate interest in concrete wholes, the realities of the created world, the very things which actually do exist; and, out of the resources of his penetrative genius, to create new things like the old is the highest ambition of his nature. Every artistic mind grasps at individual wholes; but not to every one is given this power to reproduce them in the complex reality in which they exist in the living world. The most common poetic power is that which, by intermittent exertions of the faculty of insight or the sense of loveliness, grasps some fragment of the beauty of the universe and shakes out its hidden gold, or gathers some flying whisper of the world's harmonies and echoes it back in human language which illustrates some working passion; gives a picture to some fleeting landscape, a voice to a sentiment, a mood, or an aspiration; or freezes into language subtler than marble some passing incident as it sweeps swiftly down the never-returning current of time. These are simply expressive, and scarcely in any true sense creative poets. Others have a passion for creation, without a strong sense of the beauty of concrete wholes. These personify abstract emotions, dwell among ideas as contrasted with things; if they create a man, they make him only the incarnation of a single passion, or of a set of opinions and feelings; they don't feel that this is defective, that they are vivifying phantoms which want flesh and blood; their imagination does not grasp at a passionate man, but at passions which it endows with the attributes of man. Such a genius delights in allegory more or less transparent. It rushes into personification—often of the thinnest description. Collins attempted a drama—he might as well have tried to square the circle; the idea of a man never once probably presented itself to his mind; yet he could not help wrapping up in a hasty sketchy personification every idea that presented itself to him. When the traveller in the desert is likely to want water, he says

“Bethink thee, Hassan, where shall thirst assuage,
When fails this cruise, his unrelenting rage.”

Spenser was a genius of this order; he is most at home and at his best when he is expending the glorious richness of his fancy in giving external form and appropriate environment to a passion or a vice, or some yet more abstract idea—as in his fine procession of Love, or that description of Mammon—

“An uncouth savage and uncivil wight,
Of griesly hew and fowle ill-favour'd sight;
His face with smoke was tand and eies were beard,
His head and beard with sout were ill bedight,
His cole-blacke hands did seeme to have ben seard
In smythe's fire-spitting forge, and nayles like clawes appeard.

His yron cote, all overgrowne with rust,
Was underneath enveloped with gold ;
Whose glistring glosse, darkned with filthy dust,
Well yet appeared to have beene of old
A work of rich entayle and curious mould,
Woven with antickes and wyld ymagery ;
And in his lap a masse of coyne he told,
And turned upside downe, to feede his eye
And covetous desire with his huge theasury."

By the wayside leading to which

"There sat infernale Paine .

And fast beside him sat tumultuous Strife ;
The one in hand an yron whip did strayne,
The other brandished a bloody knife ;
And both did gnash their teeth, and both did threaten life.

On th' other side in one consort there sate
Cruell Revenge, and rancorous Despight,
Disloyall Treason, and hart-burning Hate ;
But gnawing Gealosy, out of their sight
Sitting alone, his bitter lips did bight ;
And trembling Feare still to and fro did fly,
And found no place where safe he shroud him might :
Lamenting Sorrow did in darknes lye ;
And Shame his ugly face did hide from living eye."

But Spenser's Red-Cross Knights, his Artigalls, his Guyons, are only coats of armour inspired with special ideas; even the girl-huntress Belphebe, his loveliest portraiture, is but the fair embodiment of fresh woodland virginity and pure animal spirits. Shelley, more intellectual, more subtle, yet less broad, was a poet of the same order, exercising his imagination on the qualities of things and facts, never on things and facts themselves.

Now De Foe is the very reverse of this turn of mind, and stands in striking contrast to it. His genius is still more one-sided, and occupies just the ground which is left bare by such poets as Spenser and Shelley. He has nothing whatever of the solvent power. The strange underlying forces and essences which these minds love to contemplate as the component elements of the world have no interest for him. He abides in the concrete; he has no analytical perception whatever. Never was there a man to whom a yellow primrose was less of any thing more than a yellow primrose. He is always occupied with the absolute existent realities of the world; with men as he saw them move in actual life; with facts as they actually happened. He never conceives abstract passions: his only idea of anger is a particular man in a passion. He has an enormous reconstructive and a very narrow creative imagination. He takes up things just as he finds them; and when he wants to create, he re-sorts them, or at most makes others exactly like them. He loses much by these limits to his nature. What he gains on the other side is that

life-likeness we spoke of in his art: the narrow range of his vision is compensated by its vividness. It is a mistake to say that the wonderful power he has of convincing you that his characters really lived in the flesh, and that all he tells you did really happen just as he says it did, arises from the minuteness of his detail. It is not the detail that causes the distinctness of the reflection in the reader's mind; it is the sharpness of the original image. A mind like De Foe's works by details; it is one of its defects that it does so. A greater genius can flash out as sharp and full an image of a concrete man as any of De Foe's, and unencumbered with useless minutiae. It can at once seize the very essence of some special attribute of human nature, and embody it in a complete and individual man. It can give you Claudio, Angelo, Lucio, Isabella, within the limits of five acts; and in doing so it furnishes, under stringent restrictions of form and in limited space, a greater variety of character than can be found within the whole range of De Foe's novels, and leaves as distinct an image of each man as we can form of the heroes of his most laboured autobiographical narratives. We don't say as familiar; but as distinct and as complete. De Foe thus arrives by means of details at a result which may be reached independently of them; and his power lies not in his love of minute circumstance, but in the close and tenacious grasp of his imagination—in the constant and distinct presence before his own mind of the conception that controls and guides his minutiae. Richardson is far more detailed in his narration than De Foe, far more universally circumstantial, more diffuse, if possible, more tiresome; every matter that he has occasion to handle, whether important or unimportant, is elaborated with the same patient microscopic attention; he is thrice as tedious as De Foe; and yet his characters are infinitely inferior in life-likeness. Lovelace is a character more striking and more complex than Roxana or Robinson Crusoe; but you do not believe in his existence in the same way: he is more of a man in a book. De Foe's detail is a more partial and discriminating one than that of Richardson. True he loves it for its own sake, and it is sometimes superfluous; but it is always under control, and duly subordinated to the effect he wishes to produce. If we read him attentively, we shall be as much struck with what he omits as with what he inserts.

Totally destitute of the power to fathom any intricacies of human nature, Defoe is familiar with its external manifestations. He may have no conscious picture of *character*; but he has a keen eye for traits of character, and a very vivid idea of *persons*. He takes a man and his life in the gross, as it were, and sets them down in writing; but as it is his characteristic to be mainly occupied with the life, not the man, so this too becomes the main source of the

reader's interest. It is not Robinson Crusoe we care about, but the account of his adventures, the solution of the problem of how to live under the circumstances. His name calls up the idea not of a man, but of a story. Say 'Lear,' and you think of a man; you have the image of the white-haired king—the central point, about which the division of his kingdom, the disaffection of his daughters, the terrors of the tempest, the soft pity and sad death of Cordelia, group themselves in subordinate place: say 'Robinson Crusoe,' and you see a desert island, with a man upon it ingeniously adapting his mode of life to his resources; the imagination of a solitary existence, reproduced in a special form with wonderful vividness, consistency, and particularity,—this is the source of our interest. It would be to impugn the verdict of all mankind to say *Robinson Crusoe* was not a great work of genius. It is a work of genius—a most remarkable one—but of a low order of genius. The universal admiration it has obtained may be the admiration of men: but it is founded on the liking of boys. Few educated men or women would care to read it for the first time after the age of five-and-twenty. Even Lamb could say it only "holds its place by tough prescription." The boy revels in it. It furnishes him with food for his imagination in the very direction in which, of all others, it loves to occupy itself. It is not that he cares for Robinson Crusoe,—that dull, ingenious, seafaring creature, with his strange mixture of cowardice and boldness, his unleavened, coarsely sagacious, mechanic nature, his keen trade-instincts, and his rude religious experiences; the boy becomes his own Robinson Crusoe—it is little Tom Smith himself, curled up in a remote corner of the playground, who makes those troublesome voyages on the raft, and rejoices over the goods he saves from the wreck; who contrives his palisade and twisted cables to protect his cave; clothes himself so quaintly in goat-skins; is terrified at the savages; and rejoices in his jurisdiction over the docile Friday, whom he thinks would be better than a dog, and almost as good as a pony. He does not care a farthing about Crusoe as a separate person from himself. This is one reason why he rejects the religious reflections, as a strange and undesirable element in a work otherwise so fascinating. He cannot enter into Crusoe's sense of wickedness, and does not feel the least concern for his soul. If a grown man reads the book in after years, it is to recall the sensations of youth, or curiously to examine the secret of the unbounded popularity it has enjoyed. How much this popularity is due to the happy choice of his subject, we may better estimate when we remember that the popular *Robinson Crusoe* is in reality only a part of the work, and the work itself only one of many others, not less well executed, from the same hand. No other man in the world could

have drawn so absolutely living a picture of the desert-island life ; but the same man has exercised the same power over more complex incidents, and the works are little read. *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* and part of *Colonel Jack* are not inferior efforts of the same genius that wrote *Robinson Crusoe* ; but the subject-matter is perhaps less well adapted for the sort of genius, and they are defaced by much both of narrated incident and expression which unfits them for the delicacy of modern readers. They are pictures of the career of vice. This is unfortunate ; for had De Foe occupied himself with the domestic life of his period, and drawn his persons and incidents thence, he would have presented us with a more vivid glimpse into the life of his times than any author has ever done. Miss Austen is not unlike De Foe in some of the main aspects of her genius, though as much his superior in handling character as she is inferior in knowledge and vigour. Had he done as she has done,—had he drawn the Sir Walter Elliots and General Tilneys, the Captain Wentworths and Henry Craufords, the Elizabeths, Anns, and Fannys of his time,—had he introduced us to the country-houses of Anne's or George I.'s time, as she has done to the Mansfield Parks and Longbourns of George III.'s, and brought to bear on them his superior sharpness of detail and wider scope of circumstantiality,—we should have gained a clearer idea of how people really lived in those days than can now be derived from all other sources of information put together. But De Foe as deliberately chooses his materials outside the field of ordinary social life as Miss Austen sedulously restricts herself within it. The latter deals with baronets, dyspeptics, young ladies, and amiable or self-sufficient clergymen. She represents the condition of man as regulated by marriage with settlements ; her widest contrasts of life are between Bath and Wiltshire, Plymouth and the Hall ; she walks gently through the well-trimmed “shrubberies” of existence, and does not trust herself ever to peep over the park-palings. De Foe goes down the ragged lanes, tramps through gorse and heather, sits by the side of the duckpond, and studies the aspect of the dunghill. Thieves and harlots, convicts, pirates, soldiers, and merchant-adventurers, are his *dramatis personee*. He has never attempted to draw a respectable man ; or if the narrative of the *History of the Plague* be an exception, he is placed amid terrors that dislocate society and strip him of all the conventional proprieties which would naturally belong to him. He gives you no picture of the manners and the life of his times except incidentally, and by showing what strange things were compatible with them, and what sort of life those led who were outcasts from them. There are men who live in the framework of society. These are the respectable men of all classes ; they accept the

state of things into which they were born. To them the arrangements of society are not laws which may be broken, but conditions of the problem of life; they never feel the slightest temptation to infringe them. They are insensible to any hampering control from them: in fact, they are not controlled by them; conforming always to them, they have grown up into them as into a mould, which cannot press them because they fit it. These are the men who become lord mayors and presidents of council, who are respected by their neighbours and preside at quarter-sessions; men who, being bred tailors, aspire to be master-tailors; who, being lawyers, think of a puisne judgeship and never of jurisprudence; who are good church-goers in the country, or if born dissenters, adhere to their own communion; men who are capable of thinking and acting for themselves in all matters in which there is not an already fixed social canon of thought and social rule of action. Such minds give consistence, stability, and endurance to society: they inhabit, they constitute its substance. There are others whose character and destiny it is to dwell, as it were, in the interstices of that substance: they are impatient of the forms of social life; they shake off its artificial restrictions; they dare opinion; they love social adventure; they lead a freer life than the others, but a more dangerous one; escaping from constraint, they lose support; refusing the control of others, they lose a protection against themselves: they form a dangerous habit of disregarding authority and breaking through rules; not conforming to custom, they lose many of the advantages of experience; and, deprived of external guards, are apt to find themselves on some sudden occasion not sufficient to themselves.

De Foe always chooses his heroes and heroines from among this latter class—often from among the lowest specimens of it; and the social conditions of his time offered him greater temptations for so doing than can operate on any writer in our times. The rules of modern society are by far less stringent and oppressive than those of an earlier time; but they extend much wider, and exercise on the whole a much more binding force. It is not that they extend to more classes than they used to do. In the beginning of the eighteenth century the different classes, more widely separated than they now are, had each its peculiar traditions and ideas as to how life ought to be conducted; and the tradesman was bound by as formal and exacting a code of social propriety as the peer. But the very markedness of the distinction between classes left a wider field in the intervals between them for the occupation of those who were not definitely included within them. In the present day class-distinctions are much less abrupt, the borders between various ranks melt insensibly one into another; and social opinion, though not without its distinctions, is

much more uniform both in its character and in its distribution. It is less of a chain binding the parts, and more of a net enveloping the whole; there is less formality, and more decorum; there is more freedom within the rules, but far more difficulty in escaping from them. It is scarcely possible now to exist as De Foe represents men doing—evading the social restraints, living in the world and yet out of society; dodging social laws, and shifting one's social relations, as may prove convenient for the time. It is the same with legal restraints. Formerly punishments were vastly more severe than they now are; but the chances of avoiding them altogether were far greater, the criminal had a much more varied and extensive field than he now enjoys. If you were taken stealing a watch out of a shop in good Queen Anne's reign, you were pretty sure to be hanged. But then, unless you were taken in the act, there was little or no danger of your being taken at all: whereas now you are sure not to be hanged; but, on the other hand, you have not a moment's peace of mind—A 1 may at any moment disturb the harmony of a cheerful supper-party by tapping you on the shoulder, and telling you you are wanted about that little job in Fleet Street. The thief's life was formerly one of more varied enterprise than it now is: it is a profession which has gone down in the world. It no longer offers any temptations to a man of spirit. The main difficulty now lies, not in committing the robbery—this the modern police don't so much care to prevent—but in escaping detection afterwards, which they have made very difficult. Hence a shifting skulking character attaches to the business. A man who makes robbery his occupation finds no opportunity of relaxing in the society of innocent men; he cannot shake off the shop; he is confined within the atmosphere of his crimes. He cannot put his predatory habits off and on, and persuade himself that he is playing with them. In former times there was a reality corresponding more or less accurately to the high-spirited, adventurous, generous thief of romance; but the gentleman-thief, such as he was, is no more. The difficulty of stopping travellers by the Great Western, and the organised detective industry of Mr. Maine's forces, have narrowed the limits of the art; and its professors are inevitably mean, base, and miserable.

De Foe puts his characters in degraded enough positions, and plunges them deep enough in the meanest criminality; but he was able to show them not absolutely dislocated from the regular order of society; they wind in and out from it, and retain some points of contact. There was then much less of a separate criminal class than now exists. It is still possible to use even the worst members of this class as subjects of fiction, but not if you work in the same way as De Foe does. You

can't show *all* the life as he does. Dickens paints the Jew, Sykes, Nancy, and the Artful Dodger, but not their actual lives and daily habits. He never shows them as they really are: he only selects the terrible, the ludicrous, or the pathetic incidents and points of character, and shrouds the stained every-day career of wickedness in silence. But De Foe gives all this; to him one event is as important as another, nothing is too commonplace, nothing too revolting for his pen, he slurs over nothing, all is put down in its naked deformity, and, where it is dull and trivial, in its naked dullness and triviality. Sir Walter Scott was the first to introduce a school of narration in direct contrast to this, and was, perhaps, the greatest master of it we have yet seen. He plays like sunlight over the summits of his subject, develops his story by selected scenes, throws into bright relief the distinguishing characteristics of the numerous *dramatis personæ* with which he crowds his canvas, and from the aspect in which they appear in special circumstances he skilfully gives you an insight into their whole nature. Think of the characters in any one of his best novels. Take *Kenilworth*: Elizabeth, Leicesters, Amy Robsart, Varney, Mike Lambourne, Tony Foster, Jean, Giles Gosling, Goldthred, Wayland, Dick Sludge, the Pedagogue Tressilian, Sussex, Raleigh, Blount, with half a score more, all of them perfectly distinct lifelike images, some more laboured, others just indicated by some light passing touch of the master's hand; but all alike clear and cognisable. Observe the language they use. It seems the most characteristic in the world, and it is so; but it is not what such people did really talk, any more than Hamlet really employed blank verse. It is an artificial language of Scott's own, always true in its essence to the requirements of character, and just sufficiently pointed with a flavour of the times in which the story is laid to give it piquancy and *vrai-semblance*. There is an exquisite dexterity displayed in the employment of traditional and antiquarian knowledge, always used so as to give as true an effect as the author himself could conceive without any of the obscurity and pedantry of raw details. Scott has not the profound insight which a great dramatist requires, but he is essentially a dramatic artist in his mode of working. De Foe is just the reverse; his strokes are all the same thickness, and he labours on with line after line and touch after touch, intent only on exact copy, and careless of the expense either of time or labour. He never drops his subject for an instant to take it up again at a more interesting point; he tracks it like a slot-hound, with his nose close to the ground, through every bend and winding. He makes people talk as they really do talk. Scott makes a conversation of a few sentences convey what in actual life would probably occupy as many pages.

De Foe gives you every word of it, traces it backwards and forwards through its repetitions, its half-utterances, its corrections, its misconceptions, its chance wanderings, its broken and reunited threads, just as people do really talk who wilfully or unconsciously are not very ready to catch one another's drift. *The Religious Courtship* occupies a pretty large volume. Most men would have found it difficult to spread the arguments over half-a-dozen pages. When a man of De Foe's vivid powers of conception tracks out with this slow perseverance the history of a life, it is impossible that we should not gather a very distinct idea of the person who lived it; it grows up in a quiet and insensible manner out of the events. We are not expressly admitted by the author into the interior nature of such a person, but we know all of him which can be gathered from a complete acquaintance with the minutest circumstances of his actions, and often even of his thoughts. We must use our own insight and judgment if we wish to know what really was the interior character of Moll Flanders, just as we must have done had we met her in life,—not altogether a pleasant sort of person. None of his heroes or heroines are. Roxana is not pleasant; Colonel Jack is decidedly not pleasant; Robinson Crusoe is not the man to make a friend of; perhaps De Foe himself was not.

All these people are modelled on himself, and differ but slightly, except in their circumstances, from one another. Every man's imagination of other men gives you some clue to his own nature. You see the bent of it, at any rate. A man writing fiction is something like one in a dream, drifted hither and thither by the spontaneous working of his instincts and aspirations. He feeds his fancy by giving free play to the various elements in his disposition; and in so doing he reveals more or less, not himself—for he is what his own controlling will and the discipline of circumstance has made him—but his natural constitution, that which may rightly be called his genius, though the word is habitually used with a more contracted signification. This unconscious self-revelation is remarkably full and explicit in De Foe, because, not penetrating into the interior of other men, he was thrown very much on the resources within himself. All his characters are woven out of the same thread; they may differ in many ways, but in certain characteristics, and those the most deep-seated, they are like one another and like the author. It is the innermost part of his nature which a man can least shake off in his writings.

De Foe was a self-occupied man; more, however, by nature than in his life. He was never a self-seeking man; on the contrary, his whole life was a sacrifice of his own interests to those of truth and what he conceived the welfare of his country. Few

men have left such a memorial of disinterested labour as his *Review*, written exclusively by himself, and published thrice a week, for many years, without profit or advantage; and by its uncompromising rejection of party-interests and single-eyed adherence to his own convictions, bringing odium on his head from Whigs and Tories alike, laying him bare to the attacks of his enemies, exposing him to countless dangers, and actually subjecting him to the grossest injuries,—slanders, law-suits, and imprisonment. Yet this *Review* itself bears evidence to the nature of the man in his anxious self-vindications, the constant reference to his own personal position, and his often and openly expressed sense of the importance of his labours.

“The author earnestly desired, and to his utmost endeavoured, to be for ever concealed: not that he was ashamed of the work, or sees any reason yet to be so; professing to have a firm belief, that he was not without a more than ordinary presence and assistance of the Divine Spirit in the performance. But being fully satisfied with the prospect of doing good by it, he desired that his ‘praise might not be of men, but of God.’

To this end, he took such measures at first for effectually preserving the secret, and for his entirely remaining in the obscurity he desired, that for some time after the publication he continued unguessed at; and he flattered himself for a while that he could be no further inquired after. ‘But Satan hindered.’”

The highest escape from the dominion of self may be said to have been closed to De Foe. It is where the intellect and the will are in constant activity under the control of the personal affections. Some men, and more women, can lose themselves in others. It is a great capacity to have; for in its highest direction and fullest development it is what the truest exponents of the Christian faith have in all times recognised as the fulfilment of the religious life. That is the service which is perfect freedom; but as the slavery to self is the most binding and oppressive of servitudes, so any degree of life in others insures, paradoxical as it may seem, its corresponding measure of freedom. This loss of self in others is not to be confounded with what in many outward respects resembles it, though in reality its direct opposite—the concentration of self in others; where one nature, often in the worst indulgence of self-seeking, grafts itself on another, becomes dependent without ceasing to be self-engrossed, and, sacrificing the natural conditions of growth, limits itself to the sustenance and health it can derive from another stock, which often bears it as one of many branches whose fall would not touch its life and scarce impair the fulness of its growth. Both these forms of self-surrender require strong affections of some sort. De Foe's affections were not strong; and he

was neither in danger of the one, nor could avail himself of the other. It is true, as Mr. Foster has forcibly stated, that De Foe lived alone in the world; true, it is a noble thing to live alone in the isolation of great purposes, too great for the sympathy of a man's compeers; and that man's nature is the highest who feels most keenly the suffering of such an isolation—great as are its supports and consolations. But there is another loneliness, which comes from a want of warmth in the emotions, from an incapacity for strong individual attachments. Such a loneliness may be due to the deficiencies of a man's nature, not to the faults for which he is responsible; but it is an independence whose root is in wretchedness. Now De Foe lived partly, certainly, in the better isolation we speak of; but partly also in the latter. That he was not a man of strong or tender affections, his whole writings bear evidence. He never represents men as permanently bound together by affection. It costs him nothing uniformly to depict attachment as subordinate to interest. He shows husband and wife as united by common interests, common objects, or common duties; but rarely, if ever, by simple love. He has written one of the most moving passages that can be found in the range of English literature. It is the accidental meeting of a mother (a transported convict) with her son, born under tragic circumstances, and whom she had not seen since his earliest years. The father and the son pass by her accidentally in the plantation:

"I had no mask; but I ruffled my hood so about my face that I depended upon it that after above twenty years' absence, and withal not expecting any thing of me in that part of the world, he would not be able to know me.—[This is the father.]—But I need not have used all that caution; for he was grown dim-sighted by some distemper which had fallen upon his eyes, and could but just see well enough to walk about, and not run against a tree or into a ditch. As they drew near to us, I said, 'Does he know you, Mrs. Owen?'—so they called the woman. 'Yes,' she said, 'if he hears me speak, he will know me; but he can't see well enough to know me or any body else.' And so she told me the story of his sight, as I have related. This made me secure; and so I threw open my hood again, and let them pass by me. It was a wretched thing for a mother thus to see her own son, a handsome comely young gentleman in flourishing circumstances, and durst not make herself known to him, and durst not take any notice of him. Let any mother of children that reads this consider it, and but think with what anguish of mind I restrained myself; what yearnings of soul I had in me to embrace him and weep over him; and how I thought all my entrails burned within me; that my very bowels moved, and I knew not what to do; as I now know not how to express those agonies. When he went from me, I stood gazing and trembling, and looking after him as long as I could see him; then, sitting down on

the grass, just at a place I had marked, I made as if I lay down to rest me ; but turned from her, and lying on my face wept, and kissed the ground that he had set his foot on."

This is intense, if not refined, pathos ; but it is the description, not of affection, but of the maternal instincts ; and his power of entering, as he sometimes does, into this and similar instincts makes his silence on the subject of the more voluntary affections only the more remarkable. Another proof of the want of susceptibility in his own nature in this respect lies in the fact that he was not acutely sensible, as most men would have been, to the isolation of his position. It is true, as Mr. Foster says, that *Robinson Crusoe* could only have been written by a man of solitude and self-sustainment ; but the passage he quotes from the preface to *Crusoe's Serious Reflections* in which the author urges the analogy between the life of his hero and his own, marks decisively how little he felt that solitude. He indicates the analogy between the experiences of his own life and the adventures of *Crusoe* in every particular, excepting just his residence on the desert island :

"The adventures of Robinson Crusoe," he says, "are one whole scene of real life of eight-and-twenty years, spent in the most wandering, desolate, and afflicting circumstances that ever a man went through, and in which I have lived so long a life of wonders in continual storms ; fought with the worst kind of savages and man-eaters by unaccountable surprising incidents ; fed by miracles greater than that of the ravens ; suffered all manner of violences and oppressions, injurious reproaches, contempt of men, attacks of devils, corrections from heaven, and oppositions on earth ; have had innumerable ups and downs in matters of fortune ; been in worse slavery than Turkish ; escaped by as exquisite management as that in the story of Xury and the boat of Salee ; been taken up ill at sea in distress ; raised again, and depressed again, and that oftener, perhaps, in one man's life, than ever was known before ; shipwrecked often, though more by land than by sea ;—in a word, there is not a circumstance in the imaginary story but has its just allusion to a real story, and chimes part for part, and step for step, with the inimitable life of Robinson Crusoe."

In his novels we see what might have been the character of De Foe, had not the conscientiousness of his will raised it above the tendencies of his nature. *Crusoe* may be said to be only deeply self-engrossed ; but *Moll Flanders*, *Roxana*, *Colonel Jack*, and *Singleton*, are selfish to the last extremes of baseness : their whole lives are only one struggle to secure their own interests, regardless not only of the welfare of others, but of gratitude, natural affection, and decency. It may be said that this is only what is to be expected if a man is writing with unsparing exactness and fidelity the lives of thieves and harlots ; but this is a

trait that pervades them all so universally, and shows itself so exactly in the same kind of way, that it evidently has a deeper root than mere appropriateness to the characters of those represented. Moreover De Foe is far from representing his characters as utterly depraved; and he is always anxious to point a moral. It seems strange to our juster notions of things,—and perhaps he wilfully deceived himself a little,—but he seems to have believed that he wrote these elaborate pictures of vice and wickedness with a direct moral purpose. "Throughout the infinite variety of this book," says he in the preface to *Moll Flanders*, "this fundamental is most strictly adhered to: there is not a wicked action in any part of it, but is first or last rendered unhappy and unfortunate; there is not a superlative villain brought upon the stage, but either he is brought to an unhappy end, or brought to be a penitent; there is not an ill thing mentioned but it is condemned even in the relation, nor a virtuous just thing but it carries its praise along with it. Upon this foundation this book is recommended to the reader as a work from every part of which something may be learned; and some just and religious inference is drawn, by which the reader will have something of instruction, if he pleases to make use of it." Thus (though these professions are not very adequately carried out) we see what the author's intentions were; but though vices and dishonesties meet with a thin share of reprobation, and are followed sooner or later by remorseful repentance, a depravity of selfishness, which to the reader seems far more abhorrent, is passed over in all the silence of complete unconsciousness. And with their selfishness and their insufficient affections, De Foe's characters have that solitary independent course through life which naturally results from these defects, and which reflects back in an exaggerated form the independent solitariness of De Foe's own life. *Moll Flanders*, *Roxana*, *Singleton*, *Colonel Jack*, all stand quite alone in the world. They are all single separate molecules, shifting to and fro in the wide sands of life—touching others, but never for a moment incorporated with them; they all live as using the world for themselves, and standing off from its binding influences; they grasp at others for a momentary assistance, but they never allow another's claim to interfere with their own liberty; they seize with the affections, but are never bound by them; they may cling to another life, but it is with a reserved power of disengagement, as a limpet clings to a rock; they never strike root in it, and grow from it, like a plant.

To turn to another point, in which the works give a glimpse into the interior of the writer. De Foe was very unfortunate as a trader; the same strong imagination acting on practical sub-

jects as is displayed in his novels, made him a reformer in society and also a speculator in business. He would seem to have been the very man to succeed in the latter function; and his failure was probably due, as indeed he himself hints, to a distracting and overbalanced interest in the former direction, and to the literary habits it engendered. Whatever was the cause of his misfortunes, he showed himself in all his reverses a man of unblemished honesty and integrity. More, he showed himself often and under strong temptations a disinterested man. Yet in his heart he must have had an intense love of property; in his novels he lets his passion for it run free. He gloats over money or bales of silk, over spices and pearls; no sums are too large for him, no items too minute; he delights in putting the values down in separate lines, and totting up the columns. He revels in doubloons and pistoles and "pieces of eight." Little inventories have an especial charm for him; he always tells you exactly what his thieves' winnings amount to, and cannot for the life of him help looking at stealing as a sort of business, and secretly rejoicing when the profits come in. When he describes three young pickpockets going out, he has a certain reluctant sympathy with the "dexterous young rogues;" and tells us: "The list of their purchase the first night was as follows:"

"1. A white handkerchief from a country wench, as she was staring up at a jack-pudding; there was 3s. 6d. and a row of pins tied up in one end of it.

2. A coloured handkerchief, out of a young country fellow's pocket, as he was buying a china orange.

3. A riband purse with 11s. 3d. and a silver thimble in it, out of a young woman's pocket, just as a fellow offered to pick her up.

N.B. She missed her purse presently; but, not seeing the thief, charged the man with it that would have picked her up, and cried out, 'A pickpocket!' And he fell into the hands of the mob; but, being known in the street, he got off with great difficulty.

4. A knife and fork, that a couple of boys had just bought, and were going home with; the young rogue that took it got it within the minute after the boy had put it in his pocket.

5. A little silver box with 7s. in it, all in small silver,—1d., 2d., 3d., 4d. pieces.

N.B. This it seems a maid pulled out of her pocket, to pay at her going into the booth to see a show; and the little rogue got his hand in and fetched it off, just as she put it up again.

6. Another silk handkerchief, out of a gentleman's pocket.

7. Another.

8. A jointed baby, and a little looking-glass, stolen off a toyseller's stall in the fair."

The account of how the little Colonel Jack and his friend the small Major dined on the proceeds of this enterprise is not to the purpose; but is so happy an illustration of De Foe's wonderful power of realising the minutest traits in a person he has once conceived, that we cannot forbear quoting it:

"When we had thus fitted ourselves, I said, 'Hark ye, Major Jack, you and I never had any money in our lives before, and we never had a good dinner in all our lives: what if we should go somewhere and get some victuals? I am very hungry.'

'So we will, then,' says the Major, 'I am hungry too. So we went to a boiling-cook's in Rosemary Lane, where we treated ourselves nobly; and, as I thought with myself, we began to live like gentlemen, for we had three-pennyworth of boiled beef, two-pennyworth of pudding, a penny brick (as they call it, or loaf), and a whole pint of strong beer; which was seven-pence in all.

N.B. We had each of us a good mess of charming beef-broth into the bargain; and, which cheered my heart wonderfully, all the while we were at dinner, the maid and the boy in the house, every time they passed by the open box where we sat at our dinner, would look in and cry, 'Gentlemen, do you call?' and, 'Do ye call, gentlemen?' I say this was as good to me as all my dinner."

In his more fortunate days, after he has reached man's estate, Colonel Jack makes his fortune in Virginia; and De Foe finds full indulgence for his fancy in making him trade with immense profits to Cuba and the coast of Mexico. There too, as in many other cases, he makes opportunities for the giving of presents, and rejoices in laying them out on the table and telling you how much every thing cost:

"This bale was, in general, made up of several smaller bales, which I had directed, so that I might have room to make presents, equally sorted as the circumstance might direct me. However, they were all considerable, and I reckoned the whole bale cost me near 200*l.* sterling in England; and, though my present circumstances required some limits to my bounty in making presents, yet the obligation I was under being so much the greater, especially to this one friendly generous Spaniard, I thought I could not do better than, by opening two of the smaller bales, join them together, and make my gift something suitable to the benefactor, and to the respect he had shown me; accordingly I took two bales, and, laying the goods together, the contents were as follows:

Two pieces of fine English broadcloth, the finest that could be got in London, divided, as was that which I gave to the governor, at the Havannah, into fine crimson in grain, fine light mixtures, and fine black.

Four pieces of fine Holland, of 7*s.* to 8*s.* per ell in London.

Twelve pieces of fine silk drugget and duroys, for men's wear.

Six pieces of broad silks, two damasks, two brocaded silks, and two mantuas.

With a box of ribands, and a box of lace; the last cost about 40*l.* sterling in England.

This handsome parcel I laid open in my apartment; and brought him up-stairs one morning, on pretence to drink chocolate with me, which he ordinarily did; when, as we drank chocolate, and were merry, I said to him,—though I had sold him almost all my cargo, and taken his money, yet the truth was, that I ought not to have sold them to him, but to have laid them all at his feet, for that it was to his direction I owed the having any thing saved at all.

He smiled, and, with a great deal of friendship in his face, told me, that not to have paid me for them would have been to have plundered a shipwreck, which had been worse than to have robbed an hospital.

At last I told him I had two requests to make to him, which must not be denied. I told him I had a small present to make him, which I would give him a reason why he should not refuse to accept; and the second request I would make after the first was granted. He said he would have accepted my present from me, if I had not been under a disaster; but, as it was, it would be cruel and ungenerous. But, I told him, he was obliged to hear my reason for his accepting it. Then I told him that this parcel was made up for him by name, by my wife and I in Virginia, and his name set on the marks of the bale; and accordingly I showed him the marks, which was indeed on one of the bales, but I had doubled it now, as above, so that I told him these were his own proper goods; and, in short, I pressed him so to receive them, that he made a bow; and I said no more, but ordered my negro,—that is to say, his negro that waited on me,—to carry them all, except the two boxes, into his apartments, but would not let him see the particulars till they were all carried away.

After he was gone, about a quarter of an hour, he came in raving, and almost swearing, and in a great passion, but I could easily see he was exceedingly pleased; and told me, had he known the particulars, he would never have suffered them to have gone as he did; and at last used the very same compliment that the governor at the Havannah used, viz. that it was a present fit for a viceroy of Mexico rather than for him."

In the substance of their constitution, still more than in special traits, do De Foe's fictitious personages echo back their creator. They have all a certain squareness and solidity; they are all of hardy and stubborn materials. - They put you in mind of timber; they have no sensibility, no pliancy. The events of life make just such an impression as blows on a heavy balk of wood; they bear the brunt and carry the dent it leaves, but the blow has no perceptible effect on them. The roughest treatment does but blunt their edges and tear off a few splinters. Theirs is never the elasticity which recovers from a blow, but the tough fibrous nature which a blow cannot permanently injure. Robin-

son Crusoe is the only one of De Foe's heroes who is at all sensible to the injuries of fortune; and even he is only a little stunned by the worst that befalls him, and less by actual evils than the imagination of them—as when he sees the footprint on the sand. De Foe himself passed through a life crowded with troubles, but a small part of which would have shattered, or even killed, many men; but they neither broke nor bowed him. Yet he had neither the levity which offers no resistance, nor the spring which casts off all the effect; he knew all he had gone through; he remembered the details of his sufferings; he felt, and even deeply, but dully. He was pachydermatous, tough, and tenacious of life. Sensitiveness is generally a part of imaginative genius; the same organisation which renders a man sensible to the finer and more elusive influences which surround him, exposes a trembling sensibility to the touch of pain or annoyance, so that sometimes he becomes like him who was

“As a nerve, o'er which do creep
The else unfelt oppressions of the world.”

But De Foe's genius had nothing of this character; and as his nature qualified him to deal only with the grosser and more obvious facts of existence, so, on the other hand, it required a hard blow to hurt him. “Thirteen times,” says he, “I have been rich and poor;” but he bore the vicissitudes of fortune with a cheerful sedateness which never failed him. He worked and lived, not like a winged Pegasus trampling the air, but like a serious laborious ox, dragging the slow plough through the long furrows, and rolling round a patient reproachful eye in answer to injury. There was nobleness too as well as constitutional phlegm in this patience of De Foe's; for it was certainly based, not only on his imperturbability of disposition, but in great measure on a trustful acceptance of God's will, and a just reliance on the goodness of the cause he advocated. His courage was of the same class. It was great, and did not fail him in arduous trials. Fear never could put him out of the course he felt called upon to follow. Still he recognised discretion as the better part of valour; he had no love of danger; and if it could be avoided without undue compromise, he was always willing to accept the terms. He had little or nothing of what we call spirit; no sensitiveness on the point of personal honour; injustice did not raise a fire in him, but a steady and resolute temper of resistance; injuries could never excite in him a desire for revenge; he replied to them by calm expostulation, or that sort of satire whose sting lies in its truthfulness,—a very thorough laying bare to day of his adversaries' weak points. Swift, with his fierce gladiatorial spirit, struck him insultingly a backhanded blow; to which De Foe re-

plied in a tone that rises something above his usual heavy strain, and which shows the fair, temperate, political tradesman in a far better light than the arrogant, conscienceless, political churchman. Among his contemporaries, the constancy with which he endured persecution, and the steady disregard of threats and indignities with which he persisted in his purposes, won him the reputation of "a man of true courage." For himself he lays claim only to a good cause:

"Fame, a lying jade, would talk me up for I know not what of courage; and they call me a fighting fellow. I despise the flattery; I profess to know nothing of it, further than truth makes any man bold; and I acknowledge, that give me but a bad cause, and I am the greatest coward in the world. Truth inspires nature; and as in defence of truth no honest man can be a coward, so no man of sense can be bold when he is in the wrong. He that is honest must be brave; and it is my opinion that a coward cannot be an honest man. In defence of truth, I think (pardon me that I dare go no further, for who knows himself?)—I say I think I could dare to die; but a child may beat me if I am in the wrong. Guilt gives trembling to the hands, blushing to the face, and fills the heart with amazement and terror. I question whether there is much, if any, difference between bravery and cowardice, but what is founded in the principle they are engaged for; and I no more believe any man is born a coward than that he is born a knave. Truth makes a man of courage, and guilt makes that man a coward."

This courage of the conscience, totally unaccompanied by any love of danger, or of combat for its own sake, might be illustrated from many pages of De Foe's novels. It is in his life, however, that we must look to see his sturdy and obstinate yet temperate nonconformist spirit, and that direct uncalculating energy, that unquestioning conviction, that intense reliance on the effect of one's own individual exertion, that power of standing alone and acting unsupported, which have given, not to the government or the higher gentry, but to the body of the English nation, its distinctive and peculiar type of character; and which De Foe possessed in a degree so remarkable, as to make him stand out perhaps of all Englishmen the most English our history can show.

In all his writings we trace an intellect corresponding to the nature we have endeavoured to describe. Like that, it was somewhat coarse in grain and confined in scope, but vigorous and powerful. A sort of Benjamin's portion of retail tradesman's mind, preserving the vulgar proportions and moving under the common conditions, but on a higher level of power,—a vessel of larger capacity and nobler uses, yet made of the same clay as the meanest. He has shrewd instincts, but cumbrous thoughts; he

can express himself as fully, and even as fast, as you please; but not concisely. His ideas are heavy malleable metal, and he loves to hammer them out; his mind moves easily, but without spring, and he is a heavy hand at a joke. No one likes to call him dull, and there is a vigour in all he writes which redeems him from the charge; but tedious and intolerably self-repeating he undeniably is. This is a defect, however, which shows less in his novels than elsewhere. He is a master in the art of narration, and for the mere telling of a story, does it better and more simply than any writer we have. His style in his novels is well adapted to the level of his subject. In itself it scarcely deserves the commendation it has received. It is like the manners of a farmer at an Inn: a man of the best breeding could not be more at his ease; but it is because he submits to no artificial restraint whatever. In his works, written expressly for amusement or instruction, the plainness of his writing suits well with his plain rude way of treating his subject, and his complete insensibility to, and disregard of, any of its refinements or less obvious aspects. His shortcomings in this respect have been one great cause of the popularity these works have obtained, especially among the less-highly cultivated classes. Every reader feels competent to say as he reads, "This is true and lifelike,"—to follow his arguments, and to comprehend his reflections. It is this which made Lamb say he was "good kitchen reading." Fielding is any thing but kitchen reading. A man must take pains with his education, and have a cultivated mind, if he intends to read *Tom Jones* so as to appreciate it. It has been called vulgar; it may contain vulgarities, but it is the least level to common capacities of any novel in the language; and De Foe's novels are perhaps the most so. The wonderful thing is, the wealth of the mine he lays bare at this low level, and on these universal conditions. There must be something very singular in a work which the chimney-sweep and the peer both understand and both find interesting,—which the latter at any rate admires, and the former fully enjoys. This would be an easy triumph if it were gained by an appeal to, or a description of, the common feelings; but the characteristic of De Foe is, that he has written books universally popular, whose interest is quite independent of this universal resource. His memory was a remarkable one, and he was widely and accurately informed in all those matters which a man learns by observation; and he had a signal power of gathering up that sort of information which is knowledge at first-hand, without requiring to be digested, and which is got through eye and ear rather than through books. His education had been good, but he appears simply to have mastered languages for practical use; to have accumulated the facts, not to have studied the ideas, conveyed in

them. Though a wide reader, he was never interested in other men's thoughts,—if he cites them, it is simply as authorities. When he himself thinks, it is (with rare exceptions) to direct practical issues; then he is sagacious, acute—even wise in broad every-day matters. Only in one direction did he indulge in any speculative thought, and only in this one direction did his imagination break through its ordinary matter-of-fact boundaries. He had a singular interest in the world of spirits. He wrote a *History of the Devil*; and it is hard to say what object he proposed to himself in this amazingly tiresome, confused, lumbering work; a strange sort of half-serious, half-burlesque attempt to track the course of the great enemy's operations, criticising "Mr. Milton's" account of his fall, counting up how many names he has in Scripture, and apologising for still calling him "plain devil;" pursuing him through Jewish history, and partly through profane; inquiring—"What may probably be the great business this black emperor has at present upon his hands, either in this world or out of it, and by what agents he works;" and finally, discussing "his last scene of liberty," and "what may be supposed to be his end." His *Life of Duncan Campbell* is another extraordinary production of the same class. It professes to be the history of a famous deaf and dumb wise man, who in those days had set up as a fortune-teller in London; and seriously accounts for his powers of penetrating futurity as derived from the second-sight and intercourse with the spiritual world. What grains of truth there may be in the book as a biography, and how far it is jest or grave hoaxing, and how far serious; how much of it the author himself believed,—it is impossible to tell. One can never say of De Foe, whether he was so fond of fiction he could never write unmixt truth, or so fond of exact truth as to spoil his hoaxes by making them too real. There is no joke in making people believe any thing short of what, at bottom, is a clear and palpable absurdity; and we are far from sharing in the modern astonishment, either that the public should at first have thought the famous tract on *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* was written in earnest, or that both dissenters and Tories should have felt incensed against the author when it was found to be ironical. Much of it is common Tory argument and assertion, seriously and forcibly put; and the exaggeration of the conclusion scarcely, if at all, overstepped the limits of what might have proceeded from the pen of a high-flying Tory enthusiast. The whole thing had no point except as coming from a dissenter, and bore no evidence of doing so in the title-page or elsewhere. To have it written at all must have rubbed the sores of the dissenters; and to find it was written in travestie exasperated their oppressors. The *History of the Apparition of*

Mrs. Veal is a very circumstantial ghost-story, and now we think it a very good joke; but it was not meant as a joke, any more than the cures of bad legs we see in the advertisements of quack ointments are meant as jokes. Very likely De Foe, in his own breast, enjoyed a grave sort of chuckle at the humour of making the apparition of "a maiden gentlewoman of about thirty years of age, who for some years past had been troubled with fits," appear to Mrs. Bargrave, and recommend the perusal of Drelincourt's *Book of Consolations against the Fear of Death*; but he never meant the public to share his amusement. It is one of the most remarkable exhibitions ever seen of a power of giving an exact air of reality to imagined facts. Its old formal precise air, our knowledge that it was got up to sell the book to which it was prefixed, and of the extraordinary success it had, amuse us who are in the secret. But De Foe did not mean it to amuse; he meant it to convince; he deliberately intended it as an imposition, and a most successful one it proved. There are plenty more such ghost-stories scattered through De Foe's works. Take the following, with its terrific vocal conclusion, as a specimen:

"In the year 1711, one Mrs. Stephens and her daughter were, together with Mr. Campbell, at the house of Mr. Ramells, a very great and noted weaver at Haggerstone; where the rainy weather detained them till late at night. Just after the clock struck twelve, they all of them went to the door to see if the rain had ceased, being extremely desirous to get home. As soon as ever they had opened the door and were all got together, there appeared before them a thing all in white; the face seemed of a dismal pallid hue, but the eyes thereof fiery and flaming, like beacons, and of a saucer size. It made its approaches to them, till it came up within the space of about three yards of them; there it fixed and stood like a figure agaze for some minutes; and they all stood likewise stiff, like the figure, frozen with fear, motionless, and speechless. When all of a sudden it vanished from their eyes; and that apparition to the sight was succeeded by a noise, or the appearance of a noise, like that which is occasioned by the fighting of twenty mastiff dogs."

All we can say as to De Foe's way of regarding these and similar supernatural, or quasi-supernatural occurrences, as we choose to think them, is, that it is clear he was not prepared entirely to disbelieve; but these sort of stories, accompanied by direct strenuous assertions as to their truth in fact, and grave argument as to their bearing on unbelief, are chiefly remarkable for our present purpose as a further indication of the strange sort of confusion there seems to have been in De Foe's mind between real fact and possible fact. His imagination is so strong, that its facts seem to him of equal weight with those of memory

or knowledge; and he appears scarcely to recognise the boundary between truth and fiction. His characters, as usual, carry the tendency a step further. They lie, to suit their purposes, at every turn, and without scruple or remorse.

De Foe was a man of strong religious convictions, and there is scarcely one of his writings which does not bear the impress of his deep sense of the all-outweighing importance of a religious life; and he can even venture to affirm, in one of his vindictory articles in his Review, that *Ad Te, quacunqve vocas*, has been the rule of his own life. He had a strong sense of direct inspiration, even as guiding to or deterring from particular actions. Neither his genius nor his heart, however, were such as to give him any profound insight into a sense of spiritual relations. He had that sort of temperament which can feel and sympathise with sudden and violent accessions of somewhat coarse religious emotion, with too much sense and staidness on the one hand, and too much conscientiousness on the other, to make him guilty either of the unseemly excesses, or the discordant self-indulgence, which distinguish the debased forms of so-called Evangelicism. All his characters repent in the same way; they are suddenly stricken with an overwhelming sense, not so much of their guilt as of their crimes; they are appalled to think themselves outcasts from God; they lay down their evil habits generally when circumstances have removed the temptation to pursue them; repent in a summary manner, and become without difficulty sincere penitents and religious characters. He has no sense of the temptations, the trials, the difficulties with which the souls of most men find themselves surrounded after they have once left home with Bunyan's pilgrim. He knows that strait is the gate, and sharp the struggle necessary to pass it; but he always seems to forget that narrow is the way even after the gate is passed.

We have strict conventional rules in England as to what are to be considered readable books for society at large. It is scarcely necessary to say, that De Foe's novels are quite outside this pale. It is not that they were written with the least idea either of pandering to a vicious nature, or shocking an innocent one; but they deal frankly with matters about which our better modern taste is silent, and use language which shocks modern refinement.

It is only fair, however, to say, they are in their essence wholesome, decent, and, above all, cleanly. They have neither the varnished prurience of Richardson, the disgusting filth of Swift, nor the somewhat too indulgent and sympathising warmth of Fielding; they are plain-spoken and gross, but that is the worst of them; and though the obvious and hammered moralities of the author seem valueless enough, it is to be remembered

that the class whose rudeness would make it impervious to injury from the absence of delicacy in these works, is just the one in a position to profit by their rough and primitive teaching. For those who seek it, they contain a deeper moral, not the less important because the writer was unconscious of its existence. They are warnings against the too common error of confounding crime and sin. They are the histories of criminals, who remind us at every page that they are human beings just like ourselves; that the forms of sin are often the result merely of circumstances; and that the aberration of the will, not the injury done to society, is the measure of a man's sinfulness. They show us among thieves and harlots the very same struggles against new temptations, the same slow declension and self-enfeebling wiles, which we have to experience and contend against in ourselves. We are too apt to think of the criminal outcasts of society as of persons removed from the ordinary conditions of humanity, and given up to a reprobate condition totally different from our own. One day we shall probably be surprised to find that, while right and wrong continue to differ infinitely, the various degrees of human sinfulness lie within much narrower limits than we, who measure by the external act, are at all accustomed to conceive. De Foe is a great teacher of charity; he always paints the remaining good with the growing evil, and never dares to show the most degraded and abandoned of his wretches as beyond the pale of repentance, or unattended by the merciful providences of God; nay, he can never bear to quit them at last, except in tears and penitence and in the entrance-gate at least of reconciliation.

ART. VI.—ITALY.

Correspondence with Sardinia respecting the State of Affairs in Italy; presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty. 1856.

History of Piedmont. By Antonio Gallenga. London, Chapman and Hall.

The Subalpine Kingdom. By Bayle St. John. Same Publishers.

A FULLY developed conscience is an awful and perilous blessing; and if the time of its highest sensitiveness arrives prematurely, the ultimate form of the character is likely to be prejudiced rather than benefited. It is better that some rough work should be got through in boyhood, before scruples are weighed and constant moral thoughtfulness exercised. Instinct has its place; and

it is to be regretted when a man has lost the opportunity of gaining that rude and imperious self-reliance, that sense of force, that power of flinging himself recklessly upon his object, which can hardly be acquired with a safe conscience when the judgment has begun to occupy itself with the problems of duty. In this respect nations are not unlike men. Europe is vastly indebted to those violent mediæval periods when it was thought no sin to conquer, and when the predominances which appeared carried their own justification with them, and showed themselves to be natural and legitimate by effecting the fusion of many disconnected atoms into organic wholes. International police did not exist. Political society was disintegrated. The benefits of national union could only be secured in the first instance by force; and when once the coagulation into large masses had begun, small independences were swallowed up with increasing rapidity. There was no previous history to forget, no ancient constitution to lose. Race, language, geographical position, had their due respective shares in determining the divisions of mankind; and compressive power and natural elective affinities settled their disputes so far satisfactorily, as to render modern Europe first a possibility, and then a fact.

But the simple agencies which, after all, are most effectual in nation-making belong only to a rude and unconscious society. A nation once fully formed and organised becomes conscious of a new and precious possession,—its own nationality; and unorganised or half-organised nations acquire the rooted persuasion that certain indefeasible rights of man are withheld from them. A further fusion thus becomes in all cases more difficult, and in many impracticable. The nation whose attitude is aggressive, and the nation whose attitude is defensive, have both of them characteristics which neither will consent to sacrifice; for they not only have them, but know that they have them, and that such distinctions are always considered as marking different families of men. The national language has become something more than the only medium of communication known to the people. It has acquired a sacredness of its own. Thoughts have been expressed in it which lose their full flavour if they are rendered into other words. The greatest minds of the race have left their impress on it. The genius of the people is expressed in its images, its idioms, its very syntax. Laws have grown up like language. The habitudes of domestic life, the mode of enjoying property, the gradations of rank, which are usual, have acquired the force of law. It cannot be told who the lawgiver was, nor how the common agreement of the nation was attained. It is an ultimate fact, part of the definition of the nation, that the men who compose it enjoy property in particular modes, rever-

ence particular badges of superiority, marry and are given in marriage according to certain regulations and conditions. They will not consent to speak of these things, to discuss matters affecting their social well-being, in a strange tongue, or in company with strangers. Their institutions are not arbitrary inventions, to be supported by argument, or to be modified by the logic of a cosmopolitan expediency. They are part of their nationality; and, as such, entwined with their affections. Names and phrases which belong to them are heard with a thrill which supersedes and transcends all argument; and he who is not born to their freemasonries shall not be heard to speak of them as a critic. Their history is first acted, and afterwards written. Memory recurs to deeds of ancestral valour, words of ancestral wisdom, instances of ancestral power or influence. All gathers round the national idea; till the nation is sensible of an individual soul, volition, and power, even as a single being is. The more gross and selfish elements of the conception are soon clothed and hidden by nobler ones. New duties grow up. The national ark is something not only to be defended for what it contains convenient and useful to the nation; it is to be raised aloft, and revered at home and abroad as a holy shrine sanctified by the protection of the gods. The national existence is to be exalted, beautified, perfected in every way. The deep-rooted instinct of seeking to make all work taken in hand as good as possible, receives its noblest and most fruitful development in the glorification of the national life. Finally, the self-perfecting tendency blossoms out into the belief in a mission. The nation is now sacred indeed. Has not God set her on a hill, and filled her stores with corn and wine and oil, her ports with ships, and her houses with plenty? Is not His temple in the midst of her? Has He not set her apart, and distinguished her from all other nations? Have not her sons prophesied, and filled the whole earth with their singing, and beautified the place of their birth, so that the stranger comes many leagues to gaze at it? Is this all for naught? Has she not been set on this pinnacle for a purpose? Is there not a career before her, in which religion itself seems to sanction a less degree of humility than is required of the individual man, which has, in fact, something godlike about it, and which, being godlike, must, while preserving the national supremacy, transcend mere selfish ends? She is to teach the nations how to live. She is marching onward, with a history behind her and a destiny before her; and woe to him who shall seek to check her course!

It was the misfortune of Italy that its political conscience, or rather the political consciences of its component parts, came prematurely. That special and inestimable benefit of the age of

force—the possibility of consolidating the scattered elements of a nation and establishing a central authority, without disturbing old institutions or perpetuating the distinction between conquering and conquered populations—was never enjoyed by that unhappy country,—unhappy even in the wealth of her life, her genius, and her traditions. She was not subjected to the beneficent agency of the barbarous military chief, who welds the populations of large rural tracts, stable in their inertness, into states where warlike strength and the stubborn persistency of vassal fidelity are the main objects of his own desire, and sufficient for his rude retainers. Her towns did not nourish a feeble existence behind the sevenhided shield of a strong feudality, till town and baron became collateral and friendly elements in a mixed commonwealth. Brilliant, turbulent, precocious, the national life was dissipated in a multitude of municipal republics, full-grown before their time, rapidly making separate histories each for itself, impatient of subjection, and in no way fitted for an age which was but preparing the way for a new civilisation. Other countries were raising dams against the encroaching ocean, and making the land on which their cities were to grow. Italy was building the cities without making the dams, and was pampering political self-consciousness in a thousand directions without providing the bulwarks of political strength.

Some traces, no doubt, there were of a wish to resist the purely disintegrating influences of the time. Unhappily such unity as was thought of was not a natural national unity consistent with freedom, but was a mere *souvenir* of the classical age, and had a fatal cosmopolitan taint. The Ghibelline who thought he saw a Roman empire beyond the Alps, the Guelph who connected his hopes and political faith with the cosmopolitan church of Rome, alike opened a path for the march of foreign armies, and helped to keep Italy from taking her place among the nations. It is fatal to mistake memories for hopes. The Roman empire was not to rise again as a temporal power. The majority of the small and isolated republics of Italy were soon to resign their brilliant and feverish independence, and the country was to be cut up into a multitude of divisions, perpetually dissentient, and perpetually the tools of foreign ambition. Glorious were some of their histories; but if Venice and Genoa, with their small appurtenances, could rank with the leading states of the world; if the house of Savoy, by the situation of its lands and the personal qualities of its chiefs, could so often play a great part in Europe,—what might not that country be which not only held Venice, Genoa, and Piedmont, but held also Lombardy, Florence, and Rome herself, with many other cities of ancient and modern fame, and which, as well as being the fairest terri-

tory on which the sun shines, had one of the most commanding geographical positions in the world?

The ideal Italy is a conception which has grown from age to age in the minds of her more enlightened sons. It is purely ideal. The Italy alike of the impassioned Mazzini and the politic Cavour has never yet been organised or recognised. She is an abstraction from the history of ages. The Roman republic is gone, and the Roman empire is gone after it; the Papacy is tottering; the republics of Venice, Genoa, Florence, are gone; Dante sleeps by the sand of the Adriatic, and Michael Angelo at home in Florence. But all these men and things, and more,—a crowd of great teachers, great warriors, and great saints,—all were Italian: yet Italy, to whom has been committed so much of the fire from heaven, still lives, still struggles heroically against barbarian force, and has never been allowed to stand alone and united, and has never had those rights and that position which the Frenchman, the Spaniard, and the Englishman (all of whom she has taught and inspired), regard as their birthright. This, she says, ought no longer to be. Is this longing for nationality a pampered brainsick fancy? or is it a healthy aspiration, with which we ought all to sympathise and in which we ought all to have faith?

There is a poetical sphere in politics. Let this be admitted with thankfulness and remembered, for it is too often forgotten. Every feeling of nationality is a great power. National aspirations move before vast bodies of men,—a pillar of cloud in the daytime and a pillar of fire by night. A continuous national history has a real binding force, and guarantees a still prolonged stability. The trophies of the past are but the prophecies of the future. Was not Waterloo to be expected from the England of Agincourt? and shall the England of Agincourt and Waterloo veil her pretensions because her servants have somewhat mismanaged matters in the Crimea? To destroy or smother a nationality is to root up a plant from God's garden, to diminish the variety and splendour of the world. It is true, that the world has not room for too many nationalities. It is necessary to the stability of the whole system that the independent parts should not be too numerous or too weak. It is sometimes even necessary to sacrifice small powers, or great nations with weak national instincts, to the glory and aggrandisement of some more potent political or national energy. But, as we have said, the time for this rough work, this founding of right upon might, was, so far as Europe is concerned, in the middle ages. We have now reached another period, when conquest does not involve assimilation; and conquest without assimilation is sheer destruction and ravage, unless the conquering

people owes its supremacy to its moral and intellectual, more than to its material supremacy. Our English antipathy to a power like Austria is not, then, a sickly sentimentalism, but a healthy virtue, which we are bound to feed and cherish. It is of the very essence of virtue; for it is conservative of life and vigour,—the salt of political existence, the antagonist to death and putrefaction. An Austrian diplomatist has boasted that his government was preeminently *imperial*;—in other words, an empire of force and fraud alone, founded on no natural affinities, perpetually employed in repressing national life in several subject populations, and producing no resultant national life as the consequence of their artificial union.

This antagonism of the national to the imperial spirit is the distinguishing character of those histories which most surely enlist the sympathies of a free people. We exult in the downfall of Xerxes, and mourn the successes of Philip. Whatever materialising statesmen may say, it is the extinction of a nationality, felt to be worthy to live, which excites, and which ought to excite, our feelings far more than the oppressive misgovernment which is but one of its incidents;—just as the sense of the pain and forlornness of a violent and untended death is lost sight of in the fact of murder. A little consideration, however, ought to convince those who think least of ideal wrongs, that the sufferings which they recognise and are willing to ameliorate flow directly from the conquest in which they see little or no harm. The harsh rule is generally the less crime, and often the mere unavoidable consequence. To be ruled at all is galling to the natural man. His pride requires some natural birthright of superiority to be shown him before he will succumb, and asks to be participant in the glory of his chiefs. Be the reasons ideal or material, all the world knows that a government of the imperial sort is great at the expense of its subjects, and that the fame of its functionaries carries no thrill of exultation to the hearts of the latter. There is no identification of interests between the governors and the governed, and the one will not attribute any representative character to the other. A strong feeling of inborn loyalty is necessary to reconcile men to the inevitable frictions of government; and where this is not only absent, but has its place filled by a sentiment of indignation for trampled right and a cherished allegiance to the unrealised ideal of nationality, it is not wonderful that mutual distrust, the most fruitful parent of all kinds of misrule and anarchy, should take deep root. This distrust soon shows the practical importance of that idealism which politic persons scorn. The history of the recent miseries of Europe is but the history of the distrusts of monarchs and their subjects, of assemblies and their presidents, of peoples and their leaders.

By distrusting his people, Louis Philippe lost the opportunity of gaining their trust, and so fell; and with him many fair hopes. By mutual distrust between Louis Napoleon and his assembly, their harmonious action became impossible; and by the popular distrust of the assembly, the republic ceased to be able to insure order, and Frenchmen acquiesced in the commands of one who at least trusted himself. Mutual distrust has prevented the long prescription of Austrian power in Italy from attaining any legitimacy except in protocols. Distrust determined the Hapsburgs to conquer their kingdom of Hungary; and the distrusts of Magyar and Croat, of aristocrats and democrats, of soldiers and civilians, enabled them to effect their purpose. Distrust made the mildly-governed Tuscans too easily upset their government, and the government too easily suffer itself to be upset; and a meaner distrust made the Grand Duke, when voluntarily recalled, re-enter his dominions with Austrian forces at his back. Most markedly of all, distrust of a flock by their pastor, distrust of almost all his most reliable subjects by their sovereign, distrust by the masses of a righteous and trustworthy and Italian minister, if a stern one—that distrust which points the dagger—soon rendered chimerical such hopes as there were of a free government by lay hands in Rome. Few absolute governments can, in an educated age, escape this Nemesis; but no anti-national one, whether it be the direct rule of foreign arms, or, what is in many respects worse, the reliance of a professedly independent government on foreign succour in cases of domestic commotion. Nationality, the united strength of a great race, wielded by an indigenous government, which the nation can feel to be their natural organ, is the one great condition of political confidence. Its presence insures the permanence of most of the states of Europe. If it were not for this, France would be no better off than Spain, or Spain than Italy; but having this, we feel that the problems of each will solve themselves some time or other out of the existing elements. It is only when we turn to Italy, which has it not, that all our hopes tend to some absolute change, some regeneration which shall evoke into activity principles both conservative and progressive which have been hitherto in abeyance.

On such grounds as these, then, nationality is no fancy. It is true it is very difficult to talk about it in diplomatic forms, because the questions relating to it concern facts,—matters in which the fact makes the right,—and not names and conventions. It is less easy to state than to feel the difference between a merged and a subjugated national existence, especially in cases, like that of Ireland, where it must be admitted that in the beginning there was a long period of mere subjugation, which left

its traces even at a recent time. It is only by endeavouring to arrive at a nice appreciation of historical facts that we can avoid Mr. Carlyle's deification of force on the one hand, and the Young-Ireland refusal to allow any prescriptive bar to national rights on the other. There will often be grievous errors in the estimate; but no person who takes interest in public affairs can at the present time shrink from attempting it.

Italy is remarkable as presenting a collection of bad politics, which are also anti-national; while the people are inspired by an intense feeling of nationality, which seems the more real, inasmuch as it has gone on perpetually strengthening, without having ever as yet attained its object. In this very fact we see its best hope. It appears to be not a scholarly recollection, but a modern living growth. The world, all self-conservative as it is, nevertheless does not *repeat* itself. A resuscitation, a rejuvenescence, is always suspicious. Age is a great power while the links of continuity are unbroken; but once snap the chain, and it is weary work to live on draughts from the well of the past. It is a misrepresentation to represent Italy as being in this case. Politically, she has yet to live; and the anxiety which has long filled all minds respecting her, and the sense that she cannot for ever continue in her present position, are good evidence that a power is astir in her members which will vindicate her right to live. How is she at present constituted?

Italy (with the exception of the Piedmontese kingdom) is susceptible of a twofold division—into conquered territory, and states whose governments are supported by foreign powers. The Austrian province of Venetian Lombardy constitutes the first division; Tuscany and the small duchies, the kingdom of Naples, and the Papal States, constitute the second. In this last, again, the Papal States must be distinguished from the others, inasmuch as the latter are but the satellites and advanced posts of Austria, while the former is subject to the interferences, and placed under the so-called protection, of the whole Catholic world. The condition of the conquered territory is by far the best, if we have regard to mere guarantees for mild government. The satellite states are much in the same position as that in which the kingdom of Oude recently was; that is to say, the power which maintains their governments has nothing to do with their internal administration, and cannot be made responsible for it. Tuscany has had one or two mild princes, who have reigned long; and the majority of her subjects are quiet people. She is therefore at present comparatively prosperous and happy. Naples is governed by Bourbons of the worst sort, and she is for ever oppressed and turbulent. The natural checks and responsibilities exist in neither case. Austria is ready to

keep down the people. She has no interest in seeing them contented or strong, but the contrary. The Roman government, if we look merely to the birth of its members, is the most Italian of all; but being confined to a priestly caste, and propped by foreign armies, it loses all the benefit which it might otherwise derive from this circumstance. The Papacy has never enjoyed much authority among the educated classes in Italy itself. Ever since the close of the revolutionary wars, Austria has maintained much the same attitude. She has not been actively aggressive. She has simply let it be understood that she is ready to assist governments against their subjects, when called in. In her menaces and demonstrations, as at Ferrara in 1847, she has sought the colour of treaty stipulations, and has taken care to show her teeth within (or but just outside of) the limits of law. She always holds out that she cares for nothing but the security of her own possessions; and it is scarcely likely that she has any plans for actually extending her Italian dominion. This astute policy renders her peculiarly difficult to deal with. She does not alarm the jealousies of the lesser states under her protection. Her protection is insidious, it is true, as regards Italy and Italians; but scarcely so as regards their rulers. She is, we think, by no means disposed to encroach on them, provided only that they will act in accordance with her policy, and admit her suzerainty. It is not unlikely that she may contemplate the absorption of Tuscany in the future; but the Roman states would present the same obstacle to Austrian conquest as to every other plan for the unity of Italy; and no menaces appear to be directed against Naples. To two things she is opposed—namely, to the drawing together of the bonds of Italian unity, because Venetian Lombardy would so be drawn more out of her sphere in the direction of national independence; and also to the extension of really liberal institutions in Italy, which would disturb her internal polity, and would indirectly, but no less powerfully, have the same effect of bringing out the national character of her Italian states. She does not disclaim this attitude by barely admitting the right of independent states to form leagues, and to promote internal reforms—Austria has always stuck too close to legality to question such simple principles; but she has conclusively shown, in Naples, in Tuscany, and in the Legations, and more recently in Parma, that she recognises no legitimacy in that popular pressure which alone can transform a despotic into a free state; and she has lately stated such to be her policy in the most arrogant terms. Whichever way we turn, therefore, whether we consider nationality as the means, and internal improvement as the end, or internal development as the introduction to the glories of

nationality (and one view or the other, or both, must lie at the root of all wishes for the improvement of Italy), Austria stands in the way, a principle of pure evil. In one of his odd accesses of diplomatic candour, Lord Palmerston, by a despatch dated the 30th November 1848, instructs Sir George Hamilton, then English Minister at Florence, to say to the advanced Liberal Montanelli, then in power there, "if he [Montanelli] speaks again on the necessity of driving the Austrians out of Italy,"—"that if the Italians could accomplish this purpose by their own means, nobody could justly object to their doing so; and nobody can doubt that such an emancipation would greatly contribute to the welfare and happiness of Italy." This is, in fact, the one clear thing about the Italian question. Men of all parties agree in it, from the most moderate of the Moderates to the most exalted among the Republicans. The means of effecting it, and the hopes of seeing it done, can only be estimated after a review of the state of parties in Italy, and the attitude of neighbouring states in recent times.

Very soon after the close of the revolutionary war, and the reinstatement of the old sovereigns throughout Europe, ferments began in Italy. The governments followed the ordinary ways of restored governments; and the popular movements had little of that distinctness of conception or steadiness of purpose which afford so much ground for hope in the present Italian counsels. The real vassalage of the small states to Austria only began to be felt. The disregard that was to be paid to the little that England had been able to do for constitutional government at Vienna was then showing itself for the first time. The Italians had yet to receive one more lesson as to the emptiness of the promises made by revolutionary parties in France. There was no general uprising of all Italy, nor was there any where to be found any sufficient "covering army" to protect those separate states which took the initiative in besieging their own governments. The events of 1821 and 1831 ended in the discomfiture of the popular party, which from that time began to divide into the two classes whose dissensions are among the greatest Italian dangers. Joseph Mazzini sought to organise abroad a party with whom the unity and independence of Italy, it is true, superseded every other consideration, but who saw only one way to the object, and that a sudden and revolutionary one. Mazzini's views are so clear, and are set forth with such eloquence, and the uncompromising honesty and virtue of the man are so conspicuous, that it is difficult for those who seek his ideas at the fountain-head to escape being carried away by them; and it is with some sadness that we yield to the belief that he is not destined to save Italy in his own way. It is, however, essential to any sort of

understanding of the Italian question to appreciate his arguments at their proper value, and entirely to dismiss the notion that he is a crazy and bloodthirsty fanatic, to whom argument is unknown. He is most valuable, as indicating where difficulties lie; and nothing but disappointment can ensue from neglecting these, and expecting a Piedmontese deliverance to take place in a manner and with results concerning which we are told nothing but that the one will be satisfactory, and the other unlimited.

"The men," says Mazzini, "who reject the republican idea with unreasoning antipathy are evidently as much in the wrong as those who make of it the *sine quâ non* of their political action. A republic may be a good or a bad thing, according to time and place. There is no general identical solution to the problem. Such could not be the case, unless the moral and intellectual education of humanity were every where identical. Governments cannot be improvised. They must spring from the very heart of the people—from the history, the education, the social organisation, the habits and tendencies of the country." Starting with these premisses, he inquires how Italian society has grown up, and what its crowned heads and its nobles have done for it; and he finds that their services have been very small. "The Italian tradition is eminently republican. In England the aristocratic element has a powerful influence, because it has a history: well or ill, it *has* organised society: it has created a power, snatched from royalty, by conquering guarantees for the rights of the subject; it has founded in part the wealth and the influence of England abroad. The monarchical element has still great influence over the tendencies of France, because it also claims an important page in the national history; it has produced a Charlemagne, a Louis XI., a Napoleon; it has contributed to found the unity of France; it has shared with the commons the risks and the honours of the struggle against feudalism; it has surrounded the national banner with a halo of military glory. What is the history of the monarchy and of the aristocracy of Italy? What prominent part have they played in the national development? What vital element have they supplied to Italian strength, or to the unification of the future existence of Italy? The history of our royalty in fact commences with the dominion of Charles V., with the downfall of our last liberties; it is identified with servitude and dismemberment; it is written on a foreign page, in the cabinets of France, of Austria, and of Spain. Nearly all of them the issue of foreign families, viceroys of one or other of the great powers, our kings do not offer the example of a single individual redeeming by brilliant personal qualities the vice of subalternity to which his position condemned him; not a single one who has ever evinced

any grand national aspiration. Around them, in the obscurity of their courts, gather idle or retrograde courtiers, men who call themselves *noble*, but who have never been able to constitute an aristocracy. An aristocracy is a compact independent body, representing in itself an idea, and from one extremity of the country to another governed, more or less, by one and the same inspiration: our nobles have lived upon the crumbs of royal favour; and if on some rare occasions they have ventured to place themselves in opposition to the monarch, it has not been in the cause of the nation, but of the foreigner, or of clerical absolutism. The nobility can never be regarded as an historical element: it has furnished some fortunate *condottieri*, powerful even to tyranny, in some isolated town; it has knelt at the feet of the foreign emperors who have passed the Alps or crossed the sea. The original stock being nearly every where extinct, the races have become degenerated amidst corruption and ignorance. The descendants of our noble families at Genoa, at Naples, at Venice, and at Rome, are, for the most part, specimens of absolute intellectual nullity. Almost every thing that has worked its difficult way in art, in literature, or in political activity, is plebeian. In Italy the initiative of progress has always belonged to the people, to the democratic element. It is through her communes that she has acquired all she has ever had of liberty; through her workmen in wool or silk, through her merchants of Genoa, Florence, Venice, and Pisa, that she has acquired her wealth; through her artists, plebeian and republican, from Giotto to Michael Angelo, that she has acquired her renown; through her navigators,—plebeian,—that she has given a world to humanity; through her Popes,—sons of the people even they,—that until the twelfth century she aided in the emancipation of the weak, and sent forth a word of unity to humanity: all her memories of insurrection against the foreigner are memories of the people: all that has made the greatness of our towns dates almost always from a republican epoch: the educational book, the only book read by the inhabitant of the Alps or the Trans-tyberin who can read, is an abridgment of the history of the ancient Roman Republic. This is the reason why the same men who have so long been accused of coldness, and who had in fact witnessed with indifference the aristocratic and royal revolutions of 1820 and 1821, arose with enthusiasm and with a true power of self-sacrifice at the cry of *St. Mark and the Republic, God and the People!* These words contained for them a guarantee. They awoke in them, even unconsciously to themselves, the all-powerful echo of a living past, a confused recollection of glory, of strength, of conscience, and of dignity."

Mazzini considers that the modern condition and wants of

his country point the same way as his historical deductions. In saying that it is his peculiar merit to fix on independence of foreigners, and especially of Austria, as the one thing needful for Italy, we only mean to assign to him the highest place among those who in recent times have branded this idea on the Italian mind. But his conclusion is, that Italy can never be independent as long as it is divided; and that foreign countries would for ever make use of the jealousies subsisting between the present states to obtain a pernicious influence in the Peninsula. Seeing no hope of ejecting Austria by Italian arms alone, without the united action of all Italians, he always objected to the idea of a kingdom of North Italy, on the ground that while it fell far short of the aspirations of his own friends, it would at once excite the jealousy of Rome, Tuscany, and Naples, and disincline them to hazard all on the chances of a war which was to end in aggrandising Piedmont. Distrust of a merely federative organisation for Italy (of which Germany certainly does not present any very inviting specimen) makes Mazzini a political Unitarian. The question, then, arises, where the unity is to come from. There are but three alternatives—the union of all Italy under one of its present princes, under some new prince, or under a republican form of government. Mazzini, when the war of independence began, saw no Italian prince equal to the occasion. He did not believe that Naples, Rome, and Florence would willingly acknowledge the primacy of a Turinese king, unless the House of Savoy, forgetting all care for its own immediate safety, and throwing itself upon the Italian sentiment, performed services so brilliant and so successful as to insure the elevation of a Savoyard prince upon the shields of an enfranchised multitude of warrior freemen. For this he was prepared. To such a king he would have sacrificed his darling republic. He even admits that if the force of circumstances had created a kingdom of North Italy, and compelled the other governments of the Peninsula to acknowledge it, it might have been acquiesced in. But he saw in Charles Albert only “the Hamlet of monarchy.” Driven unwillingly into the war by the dread of losing Genoa, the dread of revolutionary movements at home, and of a Lombard republic at his doors, allured by the prospect of acquiring the Milanese as an aggrandisement to his dynasty,—an ambition which was traditional in his house, and which had more than once been nearly attained,—the king was not only reasonably suspected of being too small in his aims, too cold and timid in his resolves, but had other fatal disadvantages. Austria, at the very beginning of the war, gave out by her diplomats that she would pursue no advantage on Piedmontese territory. Wherever this transpired, it was enough to shake Italian confidence in a king who, though he might

gain by Italian victory, would not share Italian ruin in case of defeat. But besides its obvious practical bearing, this policy on the part of Austria was known to be hers by tradition, and was connected with an attitude on the part of Piedmont, which, as it had been held through a long historical period, might easily be supposed necessarily connected with her position. She had been a border state, maintaining a restless military independence by vacillating between France and Austria; convenient to both as a barrier, and therefore, though constantly attacked, never crushed by either. These were not hopeful antecedents. Charles Albert, moreover, was personally obnoxious for having in early life deserted an insurrection which looked to him as its leader, and having signalised the first years of his reign by what the now stanch friend of his dynasty, Signor Gallenga, describes as "terrible means of repression,"—means so terrible, indeed, as to inspire Gallenga himself, as he tells us, with the design of assassinating the tyrant. Small blame to Mazzini, then, if he approved Prince Metternich's penetration in saying, "*An Italian monarchy does not enter into the idea of the factious,—a positive fact must turn them from the idea of a monarchical Italy; the possible king of such a kingdom exists on neither side of the Alps,—they are marching straight towards a republic.*" Thus, from the supposed necessity of making a single state of Italy came a seeming politic defence of that republican course which seemed to Mazzini the only noble and beautiful one. Another great change was involved. Rome was necessary to a united Italy. Any other capital would be inconceivable; any Italy which did not include her would be an abortion. The downfall of the pontifical power was therefore a necessity. With these conceptions chimes in the only belief of Mazzini which we feel justified in calling a sheer fanaticism, the identification (namely) of the starting-point for a religious regeneration of Italy (and through her of the world) with a particular geographical centre. With Mazzini that centre is Rome. His new religion, whose ensign is "There is no God but God, and the People is his Prophet," and which claims a special inspiration for the assembly of believers, is to be enthroned there on the ruins of the Papacy. To us this is but another form of the old delusion of Popery,—a too great reliance on a mystical, collective, inspired triumphant body,—an expectation of seeing the highest glories of religion manifested in religious organisations, in place of treating the organisation as a transitory, relative, partial, imperfect help to the fears and fightings of the individual soul. We feel in the dim chambers of consciousness for

" the world's great altar-stairs,
That slope through darkness up to God."

Mazzini thinks that he can see them, hewn in shining marble, planted on his own Capitol, with the angels ascending and descending between the eternal city of this earth, and the city which is eternal in the heavens. We have all heard of "an Asian mystery." We do not think Mazzini's "Roman mystery" a *charlatanerie* like that; but we can as little acknowledge that Rome is the predestined perpetual seat of the manifestations of the Holy Ghost, as we can attribute the same dignity to Jerusalem or to Sinai.

We have been thus particular in stating Mazzini's ideas, because, although they are all to be found in his short and accessible work, *Royalty and Republicanism in Italy*, yet nevertheless the works of his opponents, which contain ideas much more familiar to the English mind, and which are echoed by the *Times* newspaper and those who swear by the *Times*, have so successfully raised the cuckoo-cry of "frenzy" and "fanaticism" in connection with his name, that the difficulties which he has set himself to solve, and the reasoning power which he has forged into a weapon of high temper in the glowing fire of his patriotic and religious fervour, are apt to be forgotten.

The ideas of his opponents can be more compendiously stated. Gioberti, Balbo, and D'Azeglio, accepted to the full the doctrine that Italy, to be free and prosperous, must be independent of foreign influence. Perhaps they added to their hatred of Austria a little more wholesome dread of France than the Mazzinians. They preached loyalty in the several Italian states, abstinence from conspiracy, a reconciliation between peoples and their princes, the cry for constitutions, and a federal league to expel the barbarian. Gioberti looked more to a papal, Balbo to a Piedmontese primacy.

And here let it be admitted that Mazzini showed considerable foresight in prophesying the failure of the Moderates in the immediate objects of the war of independence. There was a total want of genius and self-abandonment in Charles Albert. He was wasting his time about fortresses, and keeping an open road back to Piedmont, when he should have been sealing the passes of the Alps against Austrian reinforcements. He was clutching at the extension of his own kingdom by votes and political action, when the hero of the occasion should have felt that his destiny was in his sword, and that no royal dominion in North Italy was worth a straw unless it was established by acclamation. The ill-fated Pope was unsettling the minds of his subjects by disowning the acts of his own generals and stultifying the declarations of his own ministers. The Neapolitans were constitution-making and quarrelling at home, and holding their grasp of Sicily, when every thought and effort was wanted for

the war, and when the king's hands should have been strengthened at every forward step, the Liberals at the same time taking care to keep him straight in the path of independence. Thus far we go with Mazzini, that we firmly believe that the unifying principle of Italian nationality is to be found in the hearts of the people, not in the policy or ambition of any one prince or company of princes. We differ as to the meaning of "the people," and the mode of its action.

We have not yet adverted to the attitude of France; and in the secrecy which envelops the designs of her present ruler, her past tendencies and aims should be scanned. M. de Lamartine, in his work entitled *Le Passé, le Présent, et l'Avenir de la République*, tells us very frankly what the ideas of his party were. If Piedmont succeeded, France was to seize Savoy and Nice, not being able "to allow, or to allow without misgiving, that a power of the second order, at her very door, should suddenly alter into one of the first." If Piedmont failed, France was to come in as protector, and to assume a leading influence throughout Italy, and Lombardy, as well as Venice, was to have "a political existence, constitutional and semi-national," "guaranteed by the joint protectorate of France and England, the basis of Italian emancipation." M. de Lamartine has quite recently gone still further in the statement of his notions of Italian politics. According to the *Cours familier de Littérature*, Italy was to grow up to maturity as a federal union, "somewhat analogous to the Hellenic confederation of the towns, kingdoms, and republics of the Peloponnesus and the islands, under the protection of the Macedonian phalanxes. No doubt there would have been agitations, blind restlessness, anomalies, inexperience, collisions, rivalries, excess in resistance; but the active armed mediation of France would have been a dictatorship of common safety—accepted from necessity, until the time when this amphictyony of allies could be replaced by the amphictyony of the Italians, established and armed in their own towns." *Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis*, say we; and we wonder not that the Italians should have been very slow to invoke French assistance. The Piedmontese statesmen had an especial aversion to it, and it was not till their affairs were becoming desperate that it was solicited. General Cavaignac was then in power, and appears to have been as anxious as any English statesman for the maintenance of peace. His fear was lest the French feeling in favour of intervention should be too strong for him; and his object in obtaining the concurrence of England in a pacific mediation was, to have an answer to those of his countrymen who wished to see the army of the Alps set in motion. "A well-meaning honourable diplomacy! It wished," says Signor Gallenga, "for justice; but

it showed itself far more anxious—over-anxious—for peace. It forgot that durable peace should be grounded on justice; that it can best be secured by him who sues for it, showing all the time that he has means to enforce it." This is especially true of the English diplomacy of that period. Austria saw quickly enough that the friendly mediation meant nothing; and she fed the statesmen who liked to seem to play a liberal part with a few proposals which meant as little, but which they chose to consider as making it worth their while to proceed. It is matter for wonder to any one reading the correspondence that even the most wilful blindness could have been duped in so barefaced a way, and that Lord Palmerston's faith in the power of political sermons, unsupported by arms, should have survived the lesson.

Piedmontese statesmen, in 1848, counted upon two things—the internal prostration of Austria (which might have been decisive, if she had had her Hungarian and her Italian war on her hands at once), and the threat of French intervention. It was computed that Austria would retire, after less decisive Italian successes than would otherwise be necessary, for the mere sake of avoiding a conflict with those Gallic legions, which it was never intended to call in unless they could be brought in under such conditions as would not lay Italy at the feet of France. The game was played too fine. Lamartine's government, which would have intervened (with the objects now candidly confessed), fell before its aid was solicited, and before an unsolicited descent could take place. Austria knew that she might neglect the French danger from the commencement of the Palmerston-Cavaignac negotiations.

Let us now approach the existing and future Italian question, having due regard to the new elements imported into it since the events of 1848-9. We must choose whether we will follow Mazzini or not; and if the expression of English opinion is to have any weight with those who own his leadership, its organs must show that they appreciate both his motives and his arguments.

We admit, then, the alarming difficulties which beset the notion of a federal Italy; we admit that the external sources of peril to its independence and its good government would be in great measure removed, if its union into a single strong state could be effected. But we do not believe that this is yet possible. Granting that a revolutionary movement of the whole of Italy, from the Alps to the sea—such a convulsion as that which destroyed the French monarchy—could annihilate the Austrian power in Venetian Lombardy; and granting too that, as far as Austria alone was concerned, the rest of Europe might either stand neutral, or marshal its forces on opposite sides, one moral

obstacle would still remain—the influence of the Papacy. Mazzini's first error is to undervalue the black-frocked army which the Pope can bring into the field. The great Napoleon committed no such error. Is it credible, that while Europe is governed, as we see it governed, by despotic monarchs, who rule, in opposition to the intelligence of their kingdoms, by virtue of the ignorance and superstition of the masses who believe in the Pope, its rulers should neglect such an ally, refuse his prayers for reinstatement, and throw him upon the tender mercies of a Roman Republic? What if he found it for his interest to play the game of Liberalism all over the world? It is true that we, for our parts, should have more confidence in priestly instincts remaining true to the cause of despotism,—in the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven continuing to preserve fairly amicable relations with the power of the keys of the coffers of earth. But we cannot believe that governments biased by every interest and every passion against revolutionary movements should neglect so excellent an occasion as would be presented by the solicitations of a suppliant Pope. Nor can we think that Italy would be able to stand against the combination which would be made against her. The great powers are accustomed to having bits of territory and bits of influence, within her borders, and would be likely enough to agree on the way of making and keeping her disunited. A strong and united Italy is no continental *beau idéal*. We have seen what French republicans think of it; and we should not place much more confidence in Bonapartists or Orleanists. Germany, with all her pedantic enthusiasm about her own nationality, has no disposition to fraternise with Lombardy. Rome is the *πῶν στῶ* of Mazzini; and the Pope is the *protégé* of France and Austria, who have been accustomed to look on North Italy as a mutually-convenient debateable land, where each has some hold, and where the two have often contended.

We further incline to the belief that Mazzini is correct when he says that at present nothing but a universal republican revolution in Italy would accomplish its sudden unification, or direct its forces to an irresistible combined onset against the Austrian. He must have the benefit of the admission that this expedient is yet untried. The question is, whether it can be tried, or ought to be desired. On this head we must speak with some diffidence. On the general European considerations which strengthen the Pope, we are in as good a position to form an opinion as others. Of the dispositions of Italians we have but imperfect and contradictory information. It is nevertheless our persuasion that such a rising would not represent the deliberate, permanent sense of the Italian *people*, properly so called. It is contrary to

our political faith that such risings are to be the constructive influences of modern Europe, however necessary they may be as besoms of destruction. The wild rush of impassioned genius which from time to time seems to lift a whole nation to heaven, even as it buoys up the solitary soul of a national prophet, has its use,—has more than its *use*, in any low material sense; for it has a sacredness and a power which few earthly things possess. But the power of popular passions and affections is beneficially felt in ordinary life only when they vivify institutions, and are kindly mixed with coarser and heavier matter. Mazzini says that those who think as we do *have no faith*. He is wholly wrong. We believe in the same elements as himself; but we believe that noble agencies act by slowly transforming manners and institutions, not by sudden and violent convulsions.

Mazzini exclaims against modern monarchists for having no real monarchical passion like that which cried, "My God, my king, and my lady-love!" He says, that their "passive, inert acceptance, without affection or veneration," is merely "the result of moral cowardice, of a blind fear of the people, to whose upward movement they desire to oppose monarchy as a barrier." Not so. Monarchy has, it is true, become little more than a symbol with constitutionalists; but it is the badge of a political faith as distinct and assured as his own;—*a faith in minorities*. We believe in *the people*; but we believe that a people is a composite and not a simple body; not a single organ, which, as in the lower forms of animal life, fulfils all functions in succession, but an organism, whose parts and functions are not mutually interchangeable. We believe that in all political life of which we have any experience there must and ought to be *upper classes*; that these are the natural organs of the very people itself for purposes of government; and that the primacy which falls to their share in the order of nature is not to be resigned by them with impunity. Mazzini deifies popular passion. We too can glory in its majestic and beautiful manifestations; but, like all passion, it cannot be allowed its full sweep. Great is inspiration, whether religious, poetical, or patriotic; but it is not by inspiration that the practical business of the world can be transacted.

Having this strong faith, we cannot but see the phenomena of recent Italian politics by its light. Believing that the Moderates were right in theory, we can put but one interpretation on the lead which they took in the Italy of 1848. Mazzini says that the Republicans waived the immediate prosecution of their designs for the sake of trying the experiment wished by the Moderates, and in order not to throw away a single chance of union. This could not have been unless the bulk of influential society had been anti-republican. We are forced to believe that a

republican victory would have been the victory, not of the whole nation, but of a section only; and if of a section only, not the section which could be trusted with unlimited power. Straws show the set of the wind; and we know that the Roman parliament, before and at the time of the Pope's flight, was overawed by the galleries, and that its votes were influenced by their shouts. Sure and certain is the instinct of distrust which waits on that manifestation. Let monarchy be confessed to be but a symbol. We are all Republicans; but Mazzini has identified himself with the Republicanism of numerical majorities. We do not believe that in 1848 this was the political creed which was entitled to rule in Italy. Without attaching credence to the imputations of terrorism after the Pope's flight so freely cast on the Republicans of Rome, the general acquiescence in their rule on the part of the country is easily to be accounted for. Boldness in seizing the reins of power is a great thing in perplexed times; and the presence of an invading army was calculated to rally all men round a *de facto* government. The Moderates really and truly put their creed in abeyance for the sake of national union.

Have the changes of these last years been in favour of republicanism in Mazzini's sense? We apprehend not. The great fact of the time is the maintenance of constitutional government by the Sardinian kingdom. We now hear in Italy the name of a wealthy, aristocratic, parliamentary minister, skilled in debate, and bidding for the leadership of the national party. We find that Manin, one of the most respected of republicans, the head of the Venetian government during its trying career, counsels reliance on Piedmont, and looks to that quarter for the salvation of Italy. Men of all parties admit that no extemporised government was ever better conducted than the Venetian; nor was Manin himself a man deficient in firmness or in love for republican principles. He was one of the very few who resisted the incorporation of Venice with the kingdom of North Italy; and he only yielded at last to the determined pressure of the cities of the mainland,—a pressure, by the way, the existence of which is undoubted, and a striking proof that many, even of the urban populations, had no mind for Mazzinism. He had previously shown his firmness in another way, by telling the crowds in St. Mark's Place very plainly that no government could subsist on the terms of defending its every step in the public square.

What, then, are the hopes of Piedmont for itself; and what would be the bearing of its prosperity on the general Italian question?

Addressing Englishmen, we have nothing to do but to assume that the *prima facie* case is in favour of Piedmontese well-doing. The characteristic of a government at once strong and free is,

that in the presence of an extended franchise the upper classes of the state are nevertheless its men of affairs. There is no good augury for a democracy where the arbitrary power at the base of the state deters the men of leisure and culture (who will necessarily be of the opulent class) from seeking public station. An oligarchy, and its worst form, a bureaucracy, on the other hand, demoralises both the governors and the governed, from the absence of responsibility for the one, and of a political education and *status* for the other. Of course, what we seek is, not a monopoly of office for the upper classes, but a constitution in which their natural precedence will be left to work out its legitimate consequences, and will be rather cherished than broken down. This would seem to be the case in Piedmont. Representatives of all opinions can get into parliament; but the upper classes have their full share of the seats. Mr. St. John's honest and useful though very prejudiced book gives the following summary of the electoral laws :

"The House of Deputies of the Sardinian States is composed of two hundred and four representatives, of whom twenty-two come from Savoy, twenty-four from Sardinia, and one hundred and fifty-eight from what are called the Italian provinces of Terraferma. The electoral law was promulgated by Charles Albert in 1848, shortly after the Constitution (March 4th). Its basis is tolerably large. The Piedmontese elector is required to possess only a comparatively small qualification; that is to say, must pay not less than forty francs of direct taxation, or must belong to certain liberal professions. In the province of Savoy, Nice, Oneglia, San Remo, Genoa, Chiavari, Levante, Novi, Savona, Albenga, and Bobbio, a payment of twenty francs is sufficient. No religious belief interferes with the exercise of the electoral right. All electors must have reached the age of twenty-five, must know how to read and write (*a clause that very properly excludes two-thirds of the population*), and must not have been subject to any criminal punishment, or be in a state of declared insolvency or judicial interdiction.

Any one may be elected, provided he be a subject of the king, have completed the age of thirty years, and be in the enjoyment of his civil and political rights. The absurdity of requiring any further qualification for a representative, except the confidence of his constituents, has not been repeated from England.

The deputies are elected for three years; their mandate expires of itself at the end of that time.

There are, as I have hinted, some citizens who may be electors independently of all payment of taxes, as professors in the public schools, acting members of the Royal Academy, &c. On the other hand, there are citizens who cannot be elected deputies; as paid and removable functionaries in the judicial order, members of the diplomatic corps on a mission, intendants-general of divisions or provinces, &c.

To the Chamber of Deputies must not be admitted a number of

functionaries and royal paid *employés* greater than a quarter of the total number. In case such a proportion be overpassed in the elections, the house is to draw lots for the names of those whose elections are to be annulled. When the number of *employés* is complete, all new elections of such persons are null and void.

The country is divided into two hundred and four electoral colleges. Each college names a deputy. The electoral colleges are convoked by the king.

A Piedmontese election very little resembles an English one. The voting is by ballot; and the experiment seems to be successful in every way. Our members of parliament are very fond of praising Piedmont, but they never by any chance hit upon this topic. They do not like to remind the country, that in a constitutional monarchy on the Continent secret voting is carried on so well, that we never hear of sorry knaves selling and sorrier knaves purchasing votes, directly or by their agents. Wealth may sometimes exert undue influence."

Such being the composition of the Lower House, we are further reminded of English ideas by the existence of an Upper House, the privileges of whose members flow from the crown, and which comprises most of the old aristocracy (the seats, however, being not hereditary, but held for life only), and by the fact that the sentiment of reverence for the kingly office is still widely diffused among the aristocracy and the lower classes, while it is much weaker in the middle class. The working of the constitution is commended to English good opinion by two facts. In the first place, Piedmontese legislators have shown themselves to be statesmen by not acting like children, who dig up the seeds they have sown to see whether the roots are striking. They have not begun destroying the stability of their polity from the outset by a fretful logical discussion of first principles, and perpetual agitation of theoretical organic changes. "The compilation of the statute," says Signor Gallenga, "was hastily proceeded with; it was, in the main, but a copy of the French charter of 1830; and, by a strange coincidence, it came out hardly a score of days after its prototype had been torn to pieces, like an old rag, by a Parisian mob; it came into operation in the midst of all the throes of the Lombard war; its Upper Chamber—the list of senators—was drawn up by the king when plunged into the gravest difficulties of the first campaign. Nevertheless the Piedmontese were too wise to quarrel with their *improvised* statute, or to wish for the immediate modification of its provisions. All they asked for was a certain amount of orderly rational freedom; the equality of all subjects before the law; uniformity of taxation; inviolability of person and property; the right of petition and association, and freedom of the press." In the next place, the first efforts of the legislature have been directed to putting a wealthy and arrogant priesthood under the

law. Special priestly jurisdiction and immunities have been abolished; but "to disengage the civil law from all ecclesiastical interference" in respect to marriage, breaking cloister, and other things, it has been necessary to begin by going to the source of church insolence, by diminishing the preposterous numbers of the clergy and the overgrown wealth of church-dignitaries. We believe that the extent of former abuses, and the nature of the moderate and tentative reforms which have as yet been made, are both but imperfectly known in England. The statistics of the question will be found fully stated in Signor Gallenga's valuable history. Suffice it to observe, that the church was "a church whose revenue exceeded one-tenth of that of the whole landed property in the kingdom; a church whose bishops, canons, &c. revelled in a wealth vastly above that which is deemed a competency for similar dignitaries in other Catholic communities." There is a clergyman for every 214 inhabitants, while the proportion in Belgium is one in 600, and in Austria one in 610. "There are Piedmontese bishops whose revenue is above 100,000 francs; that is, double the stipend allowed to the French or Belgian primate, and equal to that of all the Belgian prelates put together." The revenue of chapters is sixteen times as large as that of Belgium, a country of about the same population. Notwithstanding this vast aggregate wealth, there were 2540 parish livings with incomes under 500 francs, and to eke out these, and for other ecclesiastical purposes, the state paid in general and local taxation about 5,000,000 of francs! Under these circumstances, the confiscation of all church-property, and the conversion of the clergy from a proprietary to a salaried order, was, it seems, proposed, but pretty generally disapproved:—a proof that here, at all events, influences were at work to counteract any tendency which there might be to a system of pure governmental centralization. At last, after many struggles, a law has been passed taxing the dignitaries and wealthier incumbents, and suppressing some convents, and a great number of chapters and sinecures; the proceeds of the measure being vested in a mixed commission, under government influence, to be applied to church purposes, in lieu of the former state contribution. As a last resource, the bishops presented a specious scheme of voluntary self-taxation, on condition of the abandonment of the obnoxious bill. The king was deceived by it. He changed his ministry, and "conferred with liberal statesmen of every shade to see if any could be found to whom the bishops' proposition might seem admissible." He did not succeed; but he attempted no *coup-d'état*, and did not even seek reactionary counsels. Count Cavour returned, and the bill was passed.

The diminution of the numbers of the secular clergy seems

for the present to be left to existing agencies. By old *concordats*, Sardinian bishops, though nominated by the Pope, must be presented by the crown; and the crown is at present keeping sees vacant as they fall in. The lessening of the emoluments and power of the clergy is moreover counted on for decreasing the number of the aspirants to holy orders.

The slight and imperfect sketch which our limits allow of the Piedmontese constitution, and of the course which a leading reform is taking under it, contains in itself the statement of abundant grounds of hope. Most of them are obvious at once to an English reader, and we shall comment on one or two only.

It is characteristic of a constitutional system, that *resistance* has its place there as well as progress. We do not refer to artificial checks in the state machine, devised without reference to national traditions,—though continental Liberals attribute a liking for such devices to English thinkers,—but we take the position of the Romish church in Piedmont. We find that it is, *de facto*, a great power; that the people at large are not prepared for a total rupture with the Pope; but that there is a steady *set* of national intelligence towards curbing the priesthood. The revolutionary way would be to take the most advanced principles, and make a clean sweep of every thing which stood in the way of their logical consequences; to apply such a force, that resistance would vanish from the problem. The constitutional way is to gain one small practical step at a time.

But that is not all. The constitutionalist not only pockets small gains with a cheerful countenance,—that is but half his quality; the other half is that he takes care that what he gets he will win as a right, not receive as a favour. The Piedmontese would not get relief from taxation by favour of the bishops. Their pecuniary gain was to be also a political victory.

Another matter of congratulation is, the good faith of the king. This is admitted on all hands. He is a *re galantuomo*. All that Mr. St. John can find to say against this is, that he would like to see a Washington on the throne; not satisfied with keeping his word, but ever anxious to develop popular liberties. We, for our parts, look on this stanchness to engagements as the one essential matter. The pedagogue king is by no means a true constitutional creature. It is not a king's business to develop liberties; it is his business to recognise and protect what is established. We repeat it, *distrust* is the great bane of continental politics. Banish that from any corner of Europe, and you have there a safe seed-plot for liberty and progress. Confidence is the indispensable condition of obtaining time for growth. What are called "revolutionary

excesses" are the result of its absence. Slavery to logic is a great mischief; but the habit of rushing to extreme courses mainly proceeds from the feeling that there is no security for the retention and improvement of limited concessions. An Englishman ought to know more of the genesis of constitutions than Mr. St. John appears to do. Our Tudors, our William of Orange, did not set themselves to the task of being ciphers on theory. They exercised the power they had, and were not disposed to part with any that they could help. But they knew their limits; and when they gave up a prerogative, it was not asked for again. Elizabeth was a *re galantuomo* in her time, and so was William. It was only when a slippery race like the Stuarts were on the throne that revolutionary measures were necessary.

Before leaving the bright side of the subject, we will cite what Mr. St. John himself concedes to the Piedmontese constitution:

"Freedom in Piedmont has produced great and probably ineffaceable results. It has destroyed many intolerable grievances; but it has done something better. It has called into existence, or rather allowed the development, of a considerable class of citizens who are ready to perform the duties and accept the sacrifices necessary to the victory of truth. Its very existence, even under difficult and unfortunate conditions, is a promise to the rest of Italy, and a threat to its corrupt governments. To all who value moral over material advantages the condition of Piedmont must appear immeasurably superior, not only to that of the whole peninsula, from Lombardy to Naples, but to that of France."

The case has its less satisfactory symptoms. The worst is, the general apathy on the subject of elections. Mr. St. John admits that there is little corruption of the electors. He asserts that the corrupting influences are reserved for the representatives, and are exercised only too successfully. He also says that the Radicals cannot conscientiously return any but men of their own party, and that they fear a *coup-d'état* if they return too many of those. To these two causes—the uncertainty of the conduct of representatives when they fall under the influences of Turin, and the fear of provoking violent absolutist measures—Mr. St. John refers the apathy to which we have alluded. He gives one detailed account of an election for Sassari which, if in all respects authentic, ought to prevent Englishmen from loading Count Cavour with unqualified panegyric. It seems that the electoral college whose proceedings are in question contained 427 electors, and was composed of two sections. When they were first called together there appeared only fifty-one electors in the first section, who divided their votes between six candidates; and thirty-three

in the second section, who divided their votes between seven candidates. There was a second trial between the two candidates who had the highest number of votes, but still upwards of 250 of the 427 electors held aloof. Of the 154 votes given, the government candidate obtained ninety-two, beating his opponent by a majority of thirty. This second election had been preceded by a government circular, recommending Sassari, "if it wished to improve instead of destroying its material welfare" ("that is," says Mr. St. John, "if they wished to have roads and bridges"), to add a deputy to the ministerial majority. The transaction was commented on in the Chamber; and Mr. St. John heard Count Cavour boldly defend such interference as necessary to the existence of constitutional government!

We gather pretty much the same character of Count Cavour, allowing for the opposite biases of the writers, from the works of Mr. St. John and Signor Gallenga. "At heart an aristocrat, a hater *profani vulgi*" (these are Signor Gallenga's epithets), he always used to be considered a member of the reactionary party in internal politics; and Mr. St. John says, that till he went to the Paris conferences he spoke with contempt of Italy and "the Italian idea." He differs, however, from his predecessor D'Azeglio, in seeing the necessity of filling the offices of state without reference to aristocratic connections; and it throws great light on his character and policy to be assured, as Mr. St. John assures us, that he evidently makes a great study of the art of parliamentary debate as practised in England. Though his family is old, his wealth is the result of his own and his father's exertions. As regards the chief offices of the state, he will admit "no brother near the throne." "The towering ambition of the prime minister," says Signor Gallenga, "fully commensurate with his rare energy and unequalled ability, brooks not only no rival, but even no sharer of authority, in those departments at least which he takes immediately into his own hands. With the exception of La Marmora for war, and Paleocapa for public works, Cavour will hardly admit any but men of mediocrity into his council." Signor Gallenga is enthusiastic when he speaks of the talents of the "massy-headed, hundred-handed, sleepless, indefatigable financier;" but he nowhere attributes to him any real generosity of political sentiment. On the whole, we seem to see a keen and powerful man, not overburdened with scruples, naturally falling in with the despotic party, till he perceives that new times require new measures; but then, probably without much natural predilection, boldly and firmly selecting parliamentary government as his line, and aiming at being the founder of a new race of Italian statesmen. We can easily understand that there is some (perhaps too much) foundation for the charge made against him of

endeavouring to rule by the adroit administration of patronage. The idea is too prevalent on the Continent that constitutions are devices for substituting the rule of corruption for that of force; and Count Cavour's antecedents are not such as to entitle us to be surprised if he has somewhat of the Walpole about him. We have still less doubt that these charges are greatly exaggerated, and that those who make them are incapable of assigning their due weight to the legitimate causes which make a raw Radical member, for the first time invested with political responsibilities and brought into the society of educated politicians, shrink from acting on the "advanced" principles that previously seemed to him the only right and reasonable ones.

We can see nothing in the characteristics of Cavour hitherto adverted to that ought to be dangerous to the state. We can see ample reason for checking him by a prudent, watchful Opposition; ever ready to strengthen his hands when the national dignity is concerned, not prone to thwart him in details and beat down his prestige by a system of petty harassment, but at the same time forcing him to notice and respect its resistance to all courses savouring of bureaucratic absolutism. That his system occasions apathy instead of measured opposition, is a proof that Piedmont is not as yet secure in the possession of those qualities which guarantee the stability of a constitution.

The essence of constitutional genius, is to be able to make the best of a *de facto* government. If the body of a nation is bent upon and fitted for popular government, it ought to be able to secure it through monarchical and aristocratic forms;—always provided that military coercion and terrorism, whether exercised by means of a native standing army, or imposed by a threatening foreign power, are removed. It is not the good but the bad workman who complains of his tools. Republicanism is of many kinds. The republicanism of Mazzini and other continental liberals is a republicanism of numerical majorities, seeking to govern—not a city like mediæval Milan, or Florence, or ancient Athens; not a limited district protected by its political neutrality, comprising few extremes of wealth and poverty, and which has hardly within living memory admitted any aristocratic distinctions, like a Swiss canton; not a new and thinly populated region like the United States, where individual energy rises to the top in every department, and where foreign interference is unknown,—but an old European land, with its crowded and stationary and habit-ridden population, and all its class distinctions, and all the dangers and difficulties arising from its relations to bordering countries. It is a new thing. History has not led up to it, even in republican Italy. Its establishment would involve the overthrow, not of a court or a staff of functionaries, but of a whole

social system, and must be admitted to be full of doubt and danger. The fear is lest ballast should be wanting. Surely the men who use the language which we have no doubt Mr. St. John very faithfully reports are not calculated to work such a system. Their grand characteristic appears to be an utter want of political patience; and it is this lack which more than any thing else would make us fear to trust the vessel of the state to European republicans. They ask for unlimited power because they are not equal to the duties of an Opposition. They do not know how to apply that firm and temperate pressure at the fitting time which is the true instrument of popular power; and as a man who fails in one profession thinks his talents require one more arduous, and accordingly attempts it, instead of trying back to some easier calling, so these men, finding that they can make little use of the opportunities given to citizens of a free parliamentary state, suppose that they need nothing but unfettered power. Any thing but a pure democracy "necessitates too much compromise and manœuvring." The alternations of ins and outs—*resistance*, in fact, of any kind, any thing but the arbitrary will of a single party—is a mere system of trickery and corruption. The only true polity is that which insures the Radicals being always "in" with an enormous parliamentary majority. Some of the formulæ of the Czar Nicholas and the Emperor Napoleon III. might very easily be adopted by these gentlemen. The want of an appreciation of the true duties and limits of opposition appears to us the great danger of Piedmont. If her young liberal blood sullenly holds aloof from the government, and merely awaits an opportunity of substituting something different, we shall cease to regard her as holding the hopeful position which we trust she does. Where is to be the end of letting successive insurrections grow out of chronic distrust? Suppose Valerio or Brofferio in the place of Cavour. Will not he, too, have his turn, and be accused of corruption and what not? Such attempts as we have cited to carry government influence into elections should be firmly resisted. But let the resistance lose all taint of insurrection. Let the minister feel that the will of the people is a power which he *must* respect, but that it will be felt only within the forms and spirit of the constitution.

In one word, the qualification of our confidence in the success of the Sardinian constitution, considered with reference to internal agencies merely, lies in this, that it yet remains to be proved whether or no the popular spirit will repel the corrupting or dragooning elements of bureaucratic despotism which form the great danger of modern states. We cannot flatter ourselves that the bane is altogether absent, and every thing depends on the prompt and energetic use of the antidote.

But Piedmontese freedom is subject to another danger, which bears with equal directness on the general Italian question,—the proximity and power of Imperial France. This danger likewise must be frankly stated in England; for we do much mischief by applauding all kinds of fair appearances across the water, and seeming to sanction much of which we are in reality profoundly ignorant. Speaking of the laws regulating the press, Signor Gallenga says:

“By the original statute all suits for libel were to be tried by a jury—an institution introduced into the state only for political offences; but by a bill brought forward by the Government in February 1852, that part of the law was modified, and these suits have been referred to the ordinary magistrates. It was a measure of cruel necessity, adopted at the suggestion, or rather upon the demand, of arrogant neighbours, especially of France; and we may feel all the pain and humiliation it must have brought upon its originators. To screen the country from all quarrels with the same overbearing powers, undignified, and, if not arbitrary, at least vexatious measures have been occasionally, and are still, deemed unavoidable. The meek and tolerant D’Azeglio himself was, in 1853, compelled to avail himself of his discretionary powers as a minister towards aliens to banish a Russian democrat, Golovine, guilty of no other crime than the reproduction, in the *Journal de Turin*, of a letter by the minister himself, published in 1848, and containing some severe strictures upon the Austrian government.”

We apprehend that Austrian dictation is now over in Piedmont. Arrogance on the one side, and unwilling compliance on the other, have been succeeded by hostile demonstrations on both; and while Austria concentrates her troops near the frontier, and fortifies Piacenza, Sardinia sets herself to render Alessandria once more impregnable, going about the work in no quiet way, but loudly calling on her citizens to show their patriotism by bringing voluntary contributions to the work. Meanwhile, it is understood that Napoleon smiles upon constitutional Piedmont. At the Paris Conferences, at all events, it was clear that the French and Sardinian statesmen understood one another. Moreover, on one occasion, according to Mr. St. John, the ministerial press welcomed with a chorus of praise the work of a Neapolitan named Trinchera, which proposed the division of the whole Italian peninsula into two parts—a kingdom of the North under Victor Emmanuel, and a kingdom of the South under Lucien Murat, disposing in this summary way even of the pontifical rule. In fact, we have no doubt that French influence is in the ascendant at Turin. Considering the threatening attitude of Austria, it is impossible that Piedmont should not seek to secure at least the passive, and probably the active, amity of her other dangerous neighbour. We do not seek to gloss over the

danger to liberty which these relations imply ; but we believe it to be a danger which must be incurred, and which can be guarded against. Piedmont is on the move, and cannot isolate herself from all her neighbours alike. What her citizens can do is, to cherish their own institutions, and by active participation in politics to give them such a hold through the length and breadth of the land, as to insure their being developed in a reasonably independent way. While it is foolish to talk as if the French despotism were not full of peril to states like Piedmont, we see no ground for despondency. We believe that the statesmen of that country are fully alive to the critical nature of their position. Throughout the events of 1848-9 a wholesome jealousy of France was every where apparent ; and many a passage of suppressed bitterness in Signor Gallenga's recent book shows that at least one deputy would have applauded the Marquis Pareto with heart and soul when he said in answer to a question, "The French will not enter Piedmont unless requested ; and as they will not be requested, they will not enter."

How, then, does the position of Piedmont bear upon the general Italian question ? It is clearly idle to speak as if a speedy and sudden deliverance from foreign tyranny and domestic dissension were being contrived at Turin, and only waited to be revealed. It is also, to say the least of it, highly uncertain whether Count Cavour has even made a beginning ; and whether his plan, proposed after the Paris Conferences, for the withdrawal of the Austrians from the Legations, and the taking of their place by the French troops now in Rome, pending the organisation of a national force, will be carried into effect. Nevertheless we think that there are slowly-working germs of hope in the newly-stirred soil.

In the first place, the moral effect of the position of Piedmont, as a free government at full work in Italy, can hardly be over-estimated. The words "moral effect" are often used idly and with little thought—on the one hand, to signify influence exercised without actual conflict by him who can threaten potently ; or, on the other hand, to signify a supposed efficacy of good example in converting sinners,—an efficacy which in political life is apt to remain in supposition. We use the words in neither of those senses. Piedmont, if she consolidates her liberties, will have a great moral effect : first on Europe generally, by furnishing a logical answer to the prejudice against the Italian capacity for self-government ; secondly and chiefly, on Italy itself. It is the latter which we can hardly over-estimate. Nationality is altogether a creature of the mind, and its growth and recognition depend on moral causes. Many things must combine to render its existence possible. The ideal elements exist

in Italy in profusion ; but their realisation has been so long awaited, that they may well be insufficient for the scepticism of those practical men without whose aid they cannot be realised. Piedmont connects the idea with the facts. Its existence must justify the undefined hopes of the masses, and furnish a ready answer to the doubts of the cautious few. The anomaly of Austrian dominion is palpable to the dullest, when a free Italian nation, with an Italian life of its own, strengthens her Italian fortresses on the Austrian borders. To the class of moral influences is also to be referred the fact, that Piedmont is becoming the resort of men of intellectual and social weight from all parts of Italy. The effect produced by the mere spectacle of these men speaking freely on Italian subjects, as the honoured adopted children of a free Italian state, cannot fail to be incalculable. It is not for those who have a real *faith* in Italian nationality to doubt the impulse given to their cause by Piedmont.

When we leave the sphere of moral influence, and try to anticipate the time when, and the mode in which, Piedmontese *power* is to become available in the struggle for Italian liberty and independence, we are met by the greatest difficulties. Let not the English mind rest on a blind confidence in the destinies of Piedmont. If we are to do our own duty on the Italian question, we must keep our eyes and our ears wide open to catch the real import of every event. Piedmont is not strong enough to fight single-handed with Austria, nor can we point out any compendious way to a true Italian league, unless the fall of the Neapolitan Bourbons should enable another free Italian state to hold a thoroughly national course in the south. The Mazzinians will tell us either that the Piedmontese connection with the Western alliance was the work of men who would thankfully join both Austria and France in a conspiracy against freedom, or that the old game of French and Austrian rivalry in Italy is about to be renewed, with Piedmont for the time enlisted on the side of France, being allured thereto by baits which it is never intended to allow her in reality to grasp. We can at once appreciate the dangers of Italy, if we figure to ourselves Piedmont overreached by France, and playing the French game ; Naples side by side with Austria in a liberticide war ; and the plains of the Peninsula once more deluged with fraternal blood. It would be fatal to be blind to such dangers. We shall not be so presumptuous as to dogmatise on the countervailing hopes.

Only be this remembered. *Every* fresh step in Italy is fraught with danger. Her deliverance, on *any* theory, is a matter far more of faith than of sight. Spectators can but fix their hopes on those elements which seem to them richest in national strength. We have not faith in democratic convulsions. We

long to see a country in which the sentiment of liberty is disjoined from that blind levelling spirit which France has so fatally impressed on many minds. We would fain hope that Mazzinian republicanism may yet be replaced, not only in Italy, but throughout Europe, by something more like our English republicanism. It is the despotism of numerical majorities, and not the mere absence of monarchial forms, that the Moderates of Europe are resolved not to have. If revolutions come, they must be looked manfully in the face, and, if possible, not be merely shrieked at. Meanwhile, we think it augurs well for any country when the breathless expectation of such tornadoes, be it an ardently hopeful or an affrighted expectation, is superseded by the work of gradually erecting free institutions, and strengthening them against their enemies. A free Italian country, with a press, and a parliament, and a noble army under the control of responsible ministers, and impregnable fortifications building on the side next Austria ;—is not this in itself a sure and certain hope for the Italian cause, though we cannot as yet see the point at which the new forces are to be used? If we really believe in Italian nationality, we cannot doubt that the occasion will arise. It may be that Count Cavour's scheme for the evacuation of the Roman States by the French and Austrians may be carried out, and may involve the attainment of constitutional liberties at Rome under the guarantee of a Piedmontese army. It may be that Piedmont is destined to shield a roused Neapolitan people from those who have no right to withhold them from dealing retribution on their oppressors, and that England and France would bear her harmless in such a maintenance against Austria of the principle of non-intervention. Italy is full of contingencies. We would not dwell overmuch on the Western alliance. It would be cruel to hold out the expectation that England and France would be ready now to back Piedmont in an unprovoked crusade against Austria, or indeed that France would at any time be eager to create for herself a Mediterranean rival in a united Italy. But the provocation may come from Austria, and in such a form as to insure the antagonism of the Western powers. It is not for us to prophesy the future of Italy. Her revelation, like all revelations, will probably come in the form and at the time least calculated on beforehand. We can but look for the seeds of strength within her borders ; and we claim for Piedmontese liberty that it be admitted to hold a new and high place among the hopes of Italy—one more development, and in a very new and very right direction—an additional chance for Italy and for Europe. One benefit at least will accrue from her position : her politicians will be able to instruct Europe on the real bearings of Italian questions. It is, in itself, the beginning of better days, that we look forward

with reasonable confidence to receiving enlightenment from such a source.

Our fear in reference to the attitude of England is lest we should be contented to follow the lead of France too submissively. The place where the time for action now seems to be ripening is Naples. An English fleet would be supreme at Naples; and it cannot be supposed that the French emperor, having regard to his own position in France, would venture to oppose England were she to take a vigorous initiative in protecting an anti-Bourbon movement there against Austrian interference. Napoleon himself favoured the recent Italian discussion at Paris, and on his invitation England spoke out, through Lord Clarendon, with a plainness which his colleagues have since endeavoured to explain away. England must not be at the beck of a French emperor, to give an air of liberalism to his diplomacy, and then stop when her own principles and declarations bind her to go on. The French alliance will be an evil instead of a good if the ancient pride of England permanently submits to a secondary position. Selfishness is frequent enough, but legitimate self-assertion is one of the most commonly neglected of duties. We look for it at the hands of our rulers.

ART. VII.—SYDNEY DOBELL'S POEMS ON THE WAR.

England in Time of War. By Sydney Dobell, author of "Balder," and "The Roman." London, 1856. Smith, Elder, and Co.

AN utter incapacity in a man to criticise himself adds very seriously to the labour of others who have to discharge that duty. Mr. Dobell is scarcely at the pains even of rough-hewing his poetry. He is like a sculptor who should present us with a block of marble, with here a toe finely carved out in it, and there a finger,—here the indication of a rounded arm, and there a delicately chiselled nose,—and should ask us to admire the statue thus shadowed out, and executed only in some few arbitrary details. His thoughts and fancies flow like the sounds from an instrument of music, struck by the hand of a child,—a jumble of sweet and disconnected notes, without order or harmony. There is an utter absence of the faculty which looks on what it has made and sees that it is bad, and discards it accordingly. The reader is harassed by the constant conviction forced upon him of a shallow and easily self-satisfied artistic nature, which can be content to go on producing new masses of crude thought and hasty expression, instead of pa-

tiently labouring till some single poem, however short, has received all the perfection it is in the power of its author to bestow. There are few men of ordinary intellectual activity who could not, if they chose, vent a rude rhythmical and rhymed torrent in any assigned number of volumes, and intersperse it with more or fewer gleams of real beauty and power. Men of sense and taste are deterred from the attempt by some true knowledge of the proportion of the valuable to the commonplace in what it is in their power to produce. Men of cultivation are familiar with the productions of genius; they have learned to know and feel something of what goes to form a good poem. Completeness is necessary to them,—they shrink from what is chaotic. Their first effort is to give form and wholeness to their imaginative productions; and failing in this, they acknowledge their incapacity, and find a field for their energies elsewhere. A man who has been so unhappy as never to learn the great lesson that he must finish his work before he sends it out, lies under this disadvantage, that he is very liable to be misled in comparing his own productions with the poems of others. He will always be found instituting a mental comparison between the pearls and diamonds he has sown among his sand, and some arbitrarily disconnected phrase, or simile, or thought, in the poet he would rival. He is blind to the fact, that although his own fine thoughts and fine images are merely fine thoughts or fine images, and are just as good, or perhaps better, looked at singly than in the connection in which he has placed them, the others are living portions of a work of art, and injured by separation from a whole to which they give, and from which they receive, additional beauty.

That Mr. Dobell has an imaginative genius of more than ordinary richness his pages bear abundant evidence. It by no means follows that he is a poet. He prefers to let the waters from his spring trail in desultory ragged streamlets wherever the inclination of the ground may chance to lead them, rather than to lead them through defined channels, selected for the variety and harmony of their course. The field of literature is marshy with small and wasted dribbles of genius; and poetry, such as this before us, springs, indeed, from a fountain more copious than is common, but could not possibly be worse husbanded, or more idly allowed to run to waste. Such poetry excites a momentary attention from the brilliancy of some of its expression, and the occasional real beauty of sentiment and wealth of imaginative ideas which it discloses; but human readers will not take the good and the bad in such close conjunction. It is impossible to derive permanent pleasure from a set of verses which have at least as much to repel as to

attract. Men won't read such things twice. They make an effort, say they are fine, and forget them. More labour, more cultivation, more thought, than these poems bear any trace of, are requisite to enable a writer to hold a place in the field of English poetry. A man who can write some of the things we find here, and is content to write other things we also find,—who has got so much at his command and does so little with it,—must rest satisfied to be applauded by the *Athenæum*, and to pass into swift oblivion.

Mr. Dobell has another more positive fault. He is not simple. He is thinking how Dobell shall say something striking. All he writes is disfigured by affectation. No writer will be affected who gives the direct and simple, though the highest and fullest, expression to his thought—who is occupied only with the effort to speak himself most completely. He, on the other hand, will always be affected who is thinking how to write most effectively. A trained mind is as liable to this error as any other: but it has this advantage, that it will recoil from the results when it sees them; and if it cannot be simple, will avoid at least the more glaring results of being otherwise. But where a man has the richness of Mr. Dobell's mind without the restraints either of natural simplicity or a cultivated taste, the utmost he can produce is a wilderness of ill-combined and ill-contrasted thoughts and fancies, which seem brought together under only one dominant requisition—that all must be *fire*. This is the one *sine quâ non*. And the condition must be confessed to be well adhered to. All is not intelligible, all is not true; much is not profound, much is but a whirlwind of imagery, raising only the dust of an idea; but all is *fire*—all is effective. It is the poetry of Posters. It should be printed in large capital type, and posted in the desert places of the metropolis. It calls aloud for attention. Morison and Rowland would like to know the secret of it. It involves a terrible expenditure of words; but expense in this direction is no object though readers like ourselves may grumble somewhat at the "damnable iteration" which distinguishes Mr. Dobell's style. Some of the more striking features of what may be called the emphasis of repetition so prominent in this book are an importation from America, where Mr. Edgar Poe invented a particular form of it, of which Mr. Dobell has availed himself very largely. The essence of poetry is truth: the essence of affectation is untruthfulness. A man who strives to give poetic expression to the real passions which a sailor and his mistress feel in the anticipation and fulfilment of their meeting will write a poem, if he is capable of writing poetry at

all: a man who bends himself to say on this subject something very striking, very forcible — something which nobody has said before—which shall be utterly new, and very sure to elicit admiration—writes this sort of thing:

AFLOAT AND ASHORE.

“Tumble and rumble, and grumble and snort,
Like a whale to starboard, a whale to port;
Tumble and rumble, and grumble and snort,
And the steamer steams through the sea, love.

I see the ship on the sea, love,
I stand alone
On this rock,
The sea does not shock
The stone;
The waters around it are swirled,
But under my feet
I feel it go down
To where the hemispheres meet
At the adamant heart of the world.
O, that the rock would move!
O, that the rock would roll
To meet thee over the sea, love!
Surely my mighty love
Should fill it like a soul,
And it should bear me to thee, love;
Like a ship on the sea, love,
Bear me, bear me, to thee, love!

Guns are thundering, seas are sundering, crowds are wondering,
Low on our lee, love.
Over and over the cannon-clouds cover brother and lover, but
over and over

The whirl-wheels trundle the sea, love,
And on through the loud pealing pomp of her cloud
The great ship is going to thee, love;
Blind to her mark, like a world through the dark,
Thundering, sundering, to the crowds wondering,
Thundering ever to thee, love.

I have come down to thee coming to me, love.
I stand, I stand
On the solid sand,
I see thee coming to me, love;
The sea runs up to me on the sand:
I start—'tis as if thou hadst stretched thine hand
And touched me through the sea, love.
I feel as if I must die,
For there's something longs to fly,
Fly and fly to thee, love.
As the blood of the flower ere she blows
Is beating up to the sun,
And her roots do hold her down,
And it blushes and breaks undone
In a rose,
So my blood is beating in me, love.

I see thee nigh and nigher,
 And my soul leaps up like sudden fire,
 My life's in the air
 To meet thee there,
 To meet thee coming to me, love,
 Over the sea,
 Coming to me,
 Coming, and coming to me, love.

The boats are lowered : I leap in first,
 Pull, boys, pull ! or my heart will burst !
 More ! more !—lend me an oar !—
 I'm through the breakers ! I'm on the shore !
 I see thee waiting for me, love !

A sudden storm
 Of sighs and tears,
 A clenching arm,
 A look of years.
 In my bosom a thousand cries,
 A flash like light before my eyes,
 And I am lost in thee, love !"

There are admirable strokes intermingled here, as in all this poetry. Such an idea as

"The sea runs up to me on the sand :
 I start—'tis as if thou hadst stretched thine hand,"

has truth and beauty ; but the tenor of the whole is false, strained, and affected. His description is of the same order :

"I mused beneath the straw pent of the bricked
 And sodded cot, with damp moss mouldered o'er,
 The bristled thatch gleamed with a carcanet,
 And from the inner eaves the reeking wet
 Dripped ; dropping more
 And more, as more the sappy roof was sapped,
 And wept a mirkier wash that splashed and clapped
 The plain-stones, dribbling to the flooded door.
 A plopping pool of droppings stood before,
 Worn by a weeping age in rock of easy grain.
 O'erhead, hard by, a pointed beam o'erlapped,
 And from its jewelled tip
 The slipping slipping drip
 Did whip the fillipped pool whose hopping splashes ticked."

It is the characteristic of this, and of much modern poetry, not to use imaginative forms and language as the expression of thought or sentiment, but to use thought and sentiment as a nucleus about which to amass imaginative forms or language. The idea, which should be central and all-important, is utterly subsidiary to the costume in which it is dressed. Mr. Dobell's poetry is, like flounces and crinoline, beautiful enough, but heaped in most outrageous excess about a very thin young person in the centre of it. He aims at the reverse of concentration. His problem is : Given this idea ; how much

poetry can I spin about it? Often he descends merely to amassing printed matter by virtue of endless repetitions. Often, again, he aims at effect by mere accumulation of one phrase or word. Thus :

WIND.

“ Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold !
Oh the winter stark,
Oh the level dark,
On the wold, the wold, the wold !
Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold !
Oh the mystery
Of the blasted tree
On the wold, the wold, the wold !
Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold !
Oh the owl's croon
To the haggard moon,
To the waning moon,
On the wold, the wold, the wold !
Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold !
Oh the fleshless stare,
Oh the windy hair,
On the wold, the wold, the wold !
Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold !
Oh the cold sigh,
Oh the hollow cry,
The lean and hollow cry,
On the wold, the wold, the wold !
Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold !
Oh the white sight,
Oh the shuddering night,
The shivering shuddering night,
On the wold, the wold, the wold !”

or :

“ Ah, weary, weary day,
Oh, weary, weary day,
Oh, day so weary, oh, day so dreary,
Oh, weary, weary, weary, weary, weary,
Oh, weary, weary !”

In this sort of writing arithmetical formulæ might be advantageously employed.

Wordsworth gives us the cuckoo and the echo in four lines :

“ Yes, it was the mountain echo,
Solitary, clear, profound,
Answering to the shouting cuckoo,
Giving to it sound for sound.”

Imagine Mr. Dobell giving full effect to this idea on his favourite scale. Nothing less than shouting cuckoo through a quarto volume would afford him sufficient scope.

We confess we have little patience with the whole school of which Mr. Dobell is one of the most prominent members. Raggedness, want of finish, and exaggeration, which, as it necessarily must, often takes the form of distortion, are its characteristics. Fuseli tried the same thing in painting. He too sought for grandeur in what was strained and astonishing in the medium of his art. He more than exaggerated—he exasperated every thing. No man could sit on a stool without the muscles of his leg standing out as if he were engaged in a struggle for his life. People took snuff glaring at one another like tigers; and an elderly lady was always made as like Tisiphone as the artist could attain to. He too had genius, and even great genius; and wasted it by the want of simplicity and truthfulness. He too was once thought a great painter; and the rapid extinction of that brief notoriety, which was the sole and just reward of powers even so ample as his, misapplied as they were, may serve as a warning to those who are indulging the same false aims in another form of art.

ART. VIII.—PERSONAL INFLUENCES ON OUR PRESENT
THEOLOGY: NEWMAN—COLERIDGE—CARLYLE.

The Arians of the Fourth Century; their Doctrine, Temper, and Conduct, chiefly as exhibited in the Councils of the Church between A.D. 325 and A.D. 381. By John Henry Newman, M.A., Fellow of Oriel College. Second edition, literally reprinted from the first edition. 8vo. London: E. Lumley. 1854.

Callista; a Sketch of the Third Century. By Dr. J. H. Newman. 12mo. London: Burns and Lambert. 1856.

The Defence of the Archdeacon of Taunton, in its complete form. Royal 8vo. London: J. Masters, and J. H. and J. Parker. 1856.

Notes, Theological, Political, and Miscellaneous. By Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Edited by the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, M.A. London: Moxon. 1853.

Charges to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Lewes, delivered at the ordinary Visitations in the years 1843, 1845, 1846. By Julius Charles Hare, M.A., Archdeacon. Never before published. With an Introduction, explanatory of his position in the Church with reference to the Parties which divide it. Cambridge: Macmillan and Co. 1856.

The Doctrine of Sacrifice deduced from the Scriptures. A Series of Sermons by Frederick Denison Maurice, M.A., Chaplain of Lincoln's Inn. Cambridge: Macmillan and Co. 1854.

St. Paul and Modern Thought: Remarks on the Views advanced in Professor Jowett's Commentary on St. Paul. By J. Llewelyn Davies, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Incumbent of St. Mark's, Whitechapel. Cambridge: Macmillan and Co. 1856.

Passages selected from the Writings of Thomas Carlyle. With a Biographical Memoir. By Thomas Ballantyne. Post 8vo. London: Chapman and Hall. 1856.

"THEOLOGY," says Mr. Macaulay, in his mischievous way, "is not a progressive science." It may, however, be retrogressive; and it is sure to repay flippant neglect by lending its empty space to mean delusions. To its great problems *some* answer will always be attempted: and there is much to choose between the solutions; however imperfect, found by reverential wisdom, and the degrading falsehoods tendered in reply by the indifferent and superficial. Even in their failures, there is a vast difference between the explorings of the seeing and the blind. We deny, how-

ever, that Christian theology can assume any aspect of failure, except to those who use a false measure of success. It is not in the nature of religion, of poetry, of art, to exhibit the kind of progress that belongs to physical science. They differ from it in seeking, not the *phenomena* of the universe, but its *essence*,—not its laws of change, but its eternal meanings,—not outward nature, in short, except as expressive of the inner thought of God: and being thus intent upon the enduring spirit and very ground of things, they cannot grow by numerical accretion of facts and exacter registration of successions. They are the product, not of the patient sense and comparing intelligence which are always at hand, but of a deeper and finer insight, changing with the atmosphere of the affections and will. Instead of looking, therefore, for perpetual advance of discovery in theology, we should naturally expect an ebb and flow of light, answering to the moral condition of men's minds: and may be content if the divine truth, lost in the dullness of a material age, clears itself into fresh forms with the returning breath of a better time.

With hope thus moderate, in no confidence that the millennium is due at present, but certainly in no despair of larger visions than to-day's, we propose to glance at the newer characteristics of English theology; to trace their origin and deviation from the data of the antecedent generation; and to indicate any common point towards which their several lines of direction may seem to converge. Few thoughtful men, who have lived through the greater part of the present century, can fail to be more or less aware of a vast change in the religious ideas and spirit of the time,—a change surely to a higher mood of faith, and even of doubt. A rapid survey of its social conditions, and of its chief authors, living and departed, may help us to appreciate its magnitude and tendency.

Prior to the peace of 1815, the disposable activity of the English mind was bespoken for the most part by the excitement of European politics. What religious movement there was arose out of the contagion of "French principles," or the recoil from them; and was so subservient to the antagonism of parties in the state as to acquire no independent or scientific character. The disaffection of Ireland, and its threatened invasion by Napoleon, gave an anti-catholic direction to the zeal of the day, and enabled the "Clapham sect," favoured by the prejudices of the king and the influence of Mr. Perceval, to attain a position disproportioned to its merits. After the close of the war, the numbers and social importance of this party continued to increase. There were large arrears of domestic politics to be dealt with; and the prominence held by the Catholic question for twelve or fourteen years made a watchword of the "Bible-cry," placed the "Evangelicals" in the

van of the "Protestant interest," and Irish zealots in the van of the Evangelicals. This temporary leadership was not favourable to their permanent power. A fatal taint of political agitation infected the system; and once committed to the keeping of Hibernian rhetoric, it was spoiled for the quiet depths of the English mind.

One by one the elements of the political struggle succeeding to the war were discharged. The disabilities were swept away; the House of Commons was reconstituted; the municipalities were reformed; slavery was abolished. These great enterprises of action and resistance being over, and the strain of conflict withdrawn, attention was free for more reflective interests, and an inner movement began to replace the outward. The several religious parties, disengaged from their civic campaign, were sent home to their spiritual husbandry, and thrown upon their intrinsic resources of genius and character. The time, ever so critical for church and doctrine, had come at last,—the time of searching thought and quiet work. Other charity than would serve upon the hustings,—a deeper gospel than was known at apocalyptic tea-tables,—a piety stimulant of no platform cheers, became indispensable in evidence and expression of the Christian life. Especially at the centres of intellectual light,—the Universities, where the speculative faculties are trained,—were the reigning systems sure to be tried by the severest tests. Who could abide the day of reckoning? What party, formed amid the tastes and admirations of the previous age, could prove itself equal to the larger problems of a new time? Discharged from the work of middle-class agitation, and scrutinised by academic eyes, what had Evangelicism to show? Its men of genius?—if it has higher names than Wilberforce and Martyn, we never heard them. Its literature?—its favourites were Hannah More and Robert Montgomery. Its divinity?—it attained the altitude of Scott, Romaine, and Sumner. Its art?—the accomplishments of a modern day-school go beyond it. With faint appreciation of scholarship, and entire dislike of philosophy, it seemed studiously to repel the approaches of intellectual men; and accordingly had been illustrated by the devotion of no great mind. Its preachers, imperceptive of the English standards of good taste and reverence, could hardly be distinguished from Dissenters. Its creed, an endless chain of inflexible links, could only revolve in the same technical groove, and could apply itself to no resistance that lay out of its meridian. The cold-blooded rapture with which the most dismal pictures were drawn of this redeemed world, and a divine economy sketched which tortures every moral affection, plainly showed that the scheme was no longer realised, and had passed from an inner life to an outward opinion. The ecclesiastical doc-

trine of the party was moreover purely Erastian, and left no intelligible barrier to separate the Anglican Church from the crowd of Nonconformists at home, and the unepiscopal Protestants abroad. These features had been little noticed while the merits which balanced them were still fresh ; while the race of idle and worldly clergymen was disappearing before the new earnestness ; while great philanthropic enterprises were led by the followers of Simon ; while the fact remained conspicuous, that there was a Christianity to be recovered for the land, and that these men had stepped forth to do it. But in the third decade of this century their "first works" had grown familiar ; their weaknesses had become fixed ; their type of character had cleared itself of its accidents and taken shape. It caught the fastidious eye of Oxford ; and ere long, beneath that fine perception all the blemishes were brought out. A series of criticisms began, at first cautious and respectful ; but gradually assuming a wider range and an intenser spirit, they assailed the Evangelical party with every weapon of antipathy which could be drawn from the armory of imagination or logic, Scripture or history. The weariness and distaste felt at Oxford towards the Church-Calvinists supplied the first impulse to the Tractarian movement ; and it was chiefly with a view to displace them that a new theology was advanced. As its lines were filled in, and it acquired consistency and depth, a positive inspiration of genuine faith supervened and left all party passions behind. The great agent in this work was John Henry Newman ; without an estimate of whose genius and influence only two-thirds of the theological history of contemporary England could be written. In him and the Oxford *ecclesiastical* reaction we have our *first* source of the modern development ; not exactly first in time, or perhaps even in importance, but most conspicuous and best-defined, and therefore most tempting to begin with.

The sister University became the *officina* of no "Tracts ;" and so no one talks of a "Cambridge theology." There is such a thing, nevertheless ;—at least there is a theology, perfectly distinct and characteristic of the age, formed by Cambridge men, and born with the impress of Cambridge studies, though not elaborated on the spot. Coleridge taught at Highgate ; but he poetised and learned at Jesus College half a century before : and the men through whom chiefly his Platonic gospel has passed into the heart of our generation, Julius Hare and Frederick Maurice, acknowledge the same *alma mater*. To those who are familiar with the writings of these eminent teachers, it will not appear fanciful if we trace the origin of the school to intellectual revolt against their academic text-books, Locke and Paley. Empirical psychology and utilitarian ethics are the permanent

objects of Coleridge's hostility; and their removal is with him the prior condition of any morality or religion at all. It was reserved for Professors Sedgwick and Whewell, at a later time, to dethrone upon the spot the two established potentates in philosophy. But the murmurs against them had long been gathering. Their school had not stood still, and in its advance had become encumbered with able but inconvenient allies; betraying, in Bentham and James Mill, the tendencies full-blown which it had been often reproached with secreting. Long before the Genius of the place, starting at the shadow of its own philosophy, recoiled and took shelter with an elder faith, the sensitive and religious mind of Coleridge had not only found refuge there for himself, but opened an asylum for other wanderers, and lighted up a chain of posts to show the way. The movement, commenced in reaction from inadequate metaphysics, never rested till it found the legitimate repose of a satisfying theology. In naming the accomplished Chaplain of Lincoln's Inn as the most distinguished representative of this type of religious thought, we do not overlook the marked individuality which assigns to him a place of his own. But this very freedom and freshness in the disciple will be found characteristic, as of Plato's so of Coleridge's disciples. Mr. Maurice may well protest against the absurd classification which, under the common designation of "Broad Church," ranks him in the same series with Whately, Powell, and Williams,—men whose first principles and whole method are the most precise contradictories of his own, however congenial with him they may be in resistance to unchristian narrowness and unworthy fears. But he has always affectionately claimed his affinity with the author of the *Aids to Reflection*, and cannot be displeased if we seek him, with Julius Hare, in the parlour of the Highgate sage. In the *philosophical* reaction proceeding thence to penetrate the whole substance of Christianity, we find the *second* element in the modern development.

It would be a curious problem of literary geography to trace the stream of French intellectual influence which has passed through Edinburgh, to effect its infiltration into the English mind. Certain it is that the action of continental culture on North Britain has been more immediate and conspicuous than on South; and in return, the writings of the "Scottish school" have met with a recognition in Paris and Geneva which they never obtained in England. The genius of the country inclines, on one side, to the Gallican type of Reformed theology; on the other, to the material sciences in which Paris, on the whole, has borne the palm. Playfair, Leslie, and Dugald Stewart, in their mathematical and physical expositions, have the peculiar impress of French neatness and precision. David Hume, scarcely

English in his style, was still less so in the easy play of his logic, and the careless completeness of his Pyrrhonism. And the answers which his own countrymen gave to him were precisely such as the metaphysical orthodoxy of the *Faculté des Lettres* approved and reproduced. Again and again may be noticed a certain sympathetic or concurrent change in the speculative temperature of Edinburgh and Paris. During the depression of France after the Restoration, the reaction against the opinions and tastes of her revolutionary period was every where strong in Europe; and met in Edinburgh with no check from any fascinating system or powerful mind. The phrenology of Gall, the criticism of Jeffrey, the rhetoric of Brown, could not assuage the deeper thirst now beginning to be felt. Something else was needed than a new form of the discarded materialism, and freethinking, and sensationalism of the last age. In truth, Scottish logic and metaphysics had run dry, and by resort to them was no baptism of regeneration to be found. While many still wandered there in hope, there came out of the desert a Scottish *vates*, who had desecrated an unexhausted spring, and led the way to it by strange paths. Thomas Carlyle gave the first clear expression to the struggling heart of a desolate yet aspiring time, making a clean breast of many stifled unbeliefs and noble hatreds; and if unable to find any certain Saviour for the present, at least preparing some love and reverence to sit, "clothed and in right mind," for the Divine welcome, whenever it might come. Is the reader surprised that we keep a niche for the author of *Hero-Worship* in our gallery of *theologians*? Be it so. The officials of St. Stephen's were also surprised at the proposal to put Cromwell's effigy among the statues of the kings. We will only say, that whoever doubts the vast influence of Carlyle's writings on the inmost faith of our generation, or supposes that influence to be wholly disorganising, misinterprets, in our opinion, the symptoms of the time, and is blinded by current phraseology to essential facts. With this conviction, we must treat the *literary* reaction represented by him as the *third* element, completing the modern development.

To these three movements, distinguished by the names of Newman, Coleridge, and Carlyle, must be mainly ascribed the altered spirit, in regard to religion, pervading the young intellect of England. In proceeding to notice them one by one, we must be content with a slight glance at their most salient features. And we must wholly pass by many secondary, though far from unimportant, streams of separate influence which have swelled the confluence of change. The operation of Arnold's life,—of Whately's writings,—of Channing,—of the younger Newman,—of Theodore Parker,—of Emerson,—on the temper and belief of

the age, has in each case been considerable. But we limit ourselves to the *prophete majores*. Moreover, it is only on the *fresh powers*, cutting into original directions, and making roadways of thought where before was the forest or the flood, that we propose to dwell. Whilst these have been working their way, of course the old tendencies have not quitted the field, or lost their hold. The elder orthodoxies, the elder scepticisms, of established type, are still alive; and now and then, during the last thirty years, have put forth startling reassertions of their vitality. In Comte the physical, in Strauss the historical, negation of theology, may be said not only to reappear, but to culminate. And each of these, again, has its group of related phenomena: the Logic of Mill, the hypothesis of the *Vestiges* (and, we would add, the greater part of the replies), the Psychology of Herbert Spencer, and the propaganda of Secularism, tracing the course of the Positivist tendency; while the freer hand which scriptural criticism every where displays, its more open feeling for the *human* element in the gospel,—qualities which, most conspicuous abroad, are yet familiar to us in Bunsen, Stanley, and Jowett,—indicate a direction from which the *Leben Jesu* has rendered it impossible to recede. These, however, are but the newest steps on beaten tracks of thought. Since the age of Bacon (nay, for that matter, from the days of Socrates), we have known that to seek only natural law, was the way to find only natural law; and since the time of Semler, there is no excuse for surprise if the critique of Scripture persists in demanding some modification of our faith. To lay down the true bridge from inductive science to the living God,—to settle the relation between the human and the divine factors in the process and monuments of revelation,—these are not new difficulties; nor is it an original device to fall into despair at them, and declare that the problems can be worked only on their finite side. Comte and Strauss, therefore, we disregard, at present, as mere *continuance-phenomena*,—rather clenching the past than opening the future. They do but modify the equilibrium of given conditions: and our purpose is to describe the dynamic elements which have introduced unexpected movement.

The marvellous results of the High-Church reaction have nearly effaced the remembrance of its local and personal beginnings. It was busy at Oxford long before the first "Tracts" appeared; under an aspect, however, which gave little promise of the *Newman-ia* (to borrow a witticism of Whately's) afterwards developed. Some thirteen years before the Tracts were advertised, two undergraduates had an epistolary controversy together on the subject of *baptismal regeneration*; and the correspondent who took the *evangelical* side was John Henry New-

man. The doctrine, therefore, was in vogue ere its appointed advocate was converted. In truth, Dr. Charles Lloyd, who filled the chair of Divinity (Regius) from 1822, and the see of Oxford from 1827 till his death in 1829, was, throughout this period, obnoxious to the Evangelicals as the avowed representative of an opposite school, to which also Hawkins, Pusey, and Keble belonged. But the "Catholic" tendency of this group of friends was marked by other symptoms than the later Tractarian. Dr. Newman has remarked, that "the same philosophical elements" will "lead one mind to the Church of Rome; another to what, for want of a better word, may be called *Germanism*." * He is pleased to add, that the determination towards the Tiber or the Rhine will depend on the person's "sensibility or insensibility to sin." Perhaps, also, a little on his knowledge or ignorance of the German language and literature; without some access to which, "*Germanism*" would seem to be impossible, and therefore, in the given case, Romanism inevitable. The *Præ-Newmanites* at Oxford were not unfurnished with modern, in addition to ancient, scholarship; and, accordingly, were known to look with hope and favour on the aims of a scientific theology, and to be quite above the conventional disparagement of German research to which a blind cowardice resorts. Indeed, Dr. Pusey's first publication, dedicated to Bishop Lloyd, was a defence† of the "Theology of Germany" against the strictures of Mr. Rose in his *Cambridge University Sermons*. This little book, which, we believe, has long been suppressed, bears curious witness to the deflection of the Oxford movement from its original path. The author explains the extravagancies of Rationalism by the absurd "stiffness" and intolerable "orthodoxism" which preceded and provoked them: he welcomes the aid of Kant and Schelling in transition to a higher faith: he treats the dangerous crisis as over, and the healthy renovation of theology as in progress. Nor are his particular judgments of men and books less remarkable than the general course of his argument. Of Lessing he speaks (p. 51) with warm affection, as "probably *more Christian*," despite his scepticism, than his orthodox opponent Göze; and (p. 156) as, "perhaps rightly, preferring Pantheism to the then existing systems." He recognises (p. 177) De Wette's "really Christian faith," obscured though it might be by adherence to the philosophy of Fries. Schleiermacher receives (p. 115) the highest praise. Bretschneider is justified (p. 154) for attempting, in the *Probabilia*, to bring the Johan-

* Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, p. 71.

† An Historical Inquiry into the probable Causes of the Rationalist Character lately predominant in the Theology of Germany. By E. B. Pusey, M.A., Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. 1828.

nine question to an issue. And it is strange to hear (p. 80) from the nominal father of "Puseyism," that the "*gratia ministerialis*,"—the efficacy of the sacraments and offices, though administered by evil men,—is "an absurd and pernicious fiction." That a book abounding in such estimates should be laid by this particular author at the feet of an Oxford bishop and Regius Professor; and that the successors to that divinity chair should be first Dr. Burton and then Dr. Hampden, are clear indications of a theological tendency, present and powerful in the early years of the anti-evangelical movement, but superseded and discharged at a later stage.

In 1829, Bishop Lloyd made his mortal exit. Superfluous German and defective "sensibility to sin" having thus withdrawn to other scenes, there was room for "the same philosophical elements," with proper "sensibility" and no German, to enter from the other side, and, slipping to the front, lead on whither that happy set of graces tends. For a while it seemed doubtful which of the two paths the Oxford High Church was to take—Germanism or Romanism—theological advance or ecclesiastical retrogression: and the events of that year curiously show how little either section of the party understood its own instincts and could take its proper attitude. It was the memorable year of Catholic emancipation and Sir Robert Peel's rejection at Oxford. At that election we find Dr. Pusey among the strenuous supporters, Dr. Newman among the vehement opponents, of the minister and his Relief-bill: the former reputed to be "one of the most liberal members of the University," the latter in close "union with the most violent bigots" of "the No-popery party;"* the future Anglican in the camp of the liberals—the future Romanist in that of the Orangemen! Yet Newman had already betrayed the tendencies which ere long possessed him entirely, and become separated by them from his former associates of the same school. Not only had his private opinions opened out, from 1823-6, into something like "full-blown Popery,"† but he had evinced on their behalf that unrivalled power of personal influence which few sensitive minds can resist, and which carries with it a restless passion for its own exercise. He was, indeed, foiled in his first conflict with the Evangelical party, and in his first attempt to dictate a policy to his own; but his was not a power which depended on external success; it was a spiritual ascendancy, yielding like the air to local strokes of force, but remaining circumambient and elastic still. The minute-book of the Oxford Auxiliary Bible Society probably records the earliest public evidence of his alienation from his undergraduate faith.

* Life of Blanco White, vol. iii. p. 131.

† See F. W. Newman's Phases of Faith, p. 11.

Already remarkable for the force and fervour of his preaching, and not yet an object of theological suspicion, he had been appointed third secretary to the society in 1826, on the suggestion of Dr. Symons (present Warden of Wadham College), and with the approval of Dr. M'Bride (now Principal of Magdalen Hall), and other distinguished supporters of the Low Church. No sooner had he accepted the office than an anonymous circular appeared on the breakfast-table of sundry clergymen of the place, lamenting that the society was in the hands of the low party; urging the importance of effecting a change, and pointing out a rule which conferred a vote on every clerical subscription of half-a-guinea. It was soon whispered that this paper was not unknown to the new secretary; though one at least of his near friends felt secure in denying his connection with it, and was proportionately disturbed to find it really his production. The design, thus commenced in secret, soon threw off all disguise. The draft of the annual report, drawn up in the usual unctuous style by the first secretary, Mr. Hill (Vice-Principal of St. Edmund's Hall), came before the committee for discussion. The new secretary moved some two hundred and fifty amendments, which would have struck out all the Scripture adaptations and "gracious" jargon from the document, and turned it into such English as he might use. He lost his amendments,—his office,—and all further confidence from the Evangelical party.

The loss, however, of his tutorship in Oriel, involving as it did a breach with Dr. Hawkins (the Provost), was more significant in relation to the subsequent course of Anglicanism. In conjunction with two out of three co-tutors (the elder Fronde and Mr. [afterwards Archdeacon] Robert Isaac Wilberforce), he had requested that the Oriel men might be distributed into four separate sets; and that of these, one might be assigned to each tutor as his *pastoral charge*. The request was refused by the Provost, on the reasonable ground that, by the proposed arrangement, the students would fall, in each case, under the exclusive power of one man's mind, instead of experiencing, as was intended, the influence of the whole tutorial body. The disappointed petitioners resigned; and from that moment the preacher at St. Mary's, checked in his operations *within* his college, laid himself out for religious action *beyond* its walls, and raised his Church and Littlemore into a power of the first order in the history of English religion.

The death of Dr. Lloyd removed his chief external check at a time when his internal resources for influence were fast maturing. The Divinity chair and the episcopal office were no longer united; and scientific theology lost the shelter of the mitre. The subtle intellect and resolute will of John Henry Newman

were left without a rival: not indisposed to crush as dangerous the explorations of German criticism, which probably suggested nothing but scepticisms to his outside gaze; and impelled to organise, out of the safer materials of patristic and ecclesiastical literature, where he was at home, a scheme of doctrine with clear passages between the parts, with commodious stowing-place for every doubt, and foundations buried out of sight. We presume it must be ascribed to the influence of his friend, that Dr. Pusey never followed up the direction on which he had so well entered in his "Inquiry" concerning Rationalism; and that a few years later (in 1836) he was ready, in his turn, to employ against Dr. Hampden the very same unworthy weapons which he had wrested from the hand of Mr. Rose. When he had succumbed, all ambiguity as to the course of the movement ceased. The assault on Evangelicism from the side of free learning was silent; the guns spiked, the batteries abandoned. All was to be done from the entrenched positions of Past Authority, and the communications surrendered with the open road of Future Truth. Though some cautious years had still to pass ere the full bearings of the new system were displayed, the absence of divided command accelerated its development, and simplify its history. The preacher of St. Mary's was undisputed *choregus*: and the analysis of his personal theology preserves the essence of the whole reaction.

Whence arises that strange mixture of admiration and of distrust, of which most readers and hearers of John Henry Newman are conscious? Often as he carries us away by his close dialectic, his wonderful readings of the human heart, his tender or indignant fervour, there remains a small dark speck of misgiving which we can never wipe out. The secret perhaps lies in this,—that his own faith is an escape from an alternative scepticism, which receives the *veto* not of his reason, but of his will. He has, after all, the critical, not the prophetic mind. He wants *immediateness* of religious vision. Instead of finding his eye clearer and his foot firmer the deeper he sinks towards the ultimate ground of trust, he hints that the light is precarious, and that your step may chance on the water or the rock in that abysmal realm. The tendency of the purest religious insight is ever to quit superficial and derivative beliefs, and seek the primitive roots where the finite draws life from the Infinite. The awfulness of that position, the direct contact of the human spirit with the Divine, the loneliness of communion when all media of church and usage are removed, do not appal the piety of noblest mood. With Dr. Newman the order is reversed. He loves to work in the upper strata of the minds with which he deals, detecting their inconsistencies, balancing their wants, satisfying them with the mere coherence and relative sufficiency of their

belief, but encouraging them to shrink from the last questionings. With himself, indeed, he sometimes goes deeper, and descends towards the bases of all devout belief; but evidently with less of assurance as his steps pass down. The ground feels to him less and less solid as he penetrates from the deposits of recent experience into the inner laboratory of the world; and it is only when he stands upon the crust, and takes it as it is, that he loses the fear lest it rest upon the flood. His certainties are on the surface, and his insecurities below. With men of opposite character, often reputed to be sceptical, doubt is at the top, and is but as the swaying of water that is calm below, and sleeps in its entire mass within its granite cradle. He seems to say within himself, "There is no bottom to these things that I can find; we must therefore *put one there*; and only mind that it be sufficient to hold them in, supposing it to be real." He deals, in short, with the first truths of religion as *hypotheses*, not known or knowable in themselves, but recommended by the sufficient account they give of the facts, and the practical fitness of belief in them to our nature. He denies the existence for our mind of any thing *ἀνυπόθετον*, and treats even our highest persuasions as a provisional discipline, wholesome for us to retain, whether they be harmless errors or eternal truths. Nor is this radical scepticism merely implied at second-hand: it receives direct and repeated statement as a philosophical principle. In his History of the Arians,* the author explains the distinction drawn by the Fathers between *θεολογία* and *οικονομία*, between absolute and relative truth in regard to God. An "economy," we are told, is a representation not corresponding with the real nature of things, but reduced into adaptation to our faculties, and substituted for the truth in condescension to our incapacity. It is not simply the broken view which alone we can seize of transcendent realities, given for apprehension but not yet apprehended; it is a "pious fraud,"—a benevolent cheat,—directly put upon us by the Creator himself, to stand as the moral equivalent of a missing verity. Now, what does the author include under this class of representative illusions? Does he, like the Fathers, confine the application to the doctrine of the Incarnation and historical manifestation of God in Christ, as opposed to his inner and Absolute Essence? Far from it. He reduces to the same head the revelation to us of *moral laws*; and the suggestion, by sensible phenomena, of an *external material world*; and the aspect of *design and purpose* which the cosmical order assumes in the eyes of "the multitude." Are these things, then,—these porphyry pillars on which our very life is raised,—nothing but

* Pp. 43, 44.

appearance,—“shadows,” “beguiling the imaginations of most men with a harmless but unfounded belief”? So does our author regard them: and in his idealism saves nothing whatever, so far as we can find, from the realm of fantasy. Alike in the world of sense and in the temple of the spirit “man walketh in a vain show.” In this way the very antithesis from which he starts disappears: he gives such an extension to the system of *economy* as to swallow up the *theology* altogether, and to present God to us as never and nowhere doing any thing but “simulating” on our behalf. Not only are we kept at a distance from all realities; but the representations amid which our minds are imprisoned are, or may be, *false* representations;—false in the same way and degree as the assertion that the Mosaic dispensation was unchangeable, though all the while it was destined to be abolished. Alas! have we here no key to our author’s fondness for an esoteric and exoteric presentation of doctrine?—for a mystical as well as a literal exegesis?—for a *disciplina arcani*?—for *doubling* the aspect and expression of all that is offered as truth? If the universe and God set the example of being scenical, what shall hinder religion from becoming histrionic?

The hypothetical nature of even the most fundamental propositions in theology,—their dependence on assumptions which not our vision but our blindness compels us to make,—is strongly asserted in the following paragraph of the fourteenth University Sermon; on the Theory of Developments in religious doctrine:

“It is true that God is without beginning, *if* eternity may worthily be considered to imply succession; in every place, *if* He who is a Spirit can have relations with space. It is right to speak of His Being and Attributes, *if* He be not rather super-essential; it is true to say that He is wise or powerful, *if* we may consider Him as other than the most simple Unity. He is truly Three, *if* He is truly One; He is truly One, *if* the idea of Him falls under earthly number. He has a triple Personality in the sense in which the Infinite can be understood to have Personality at all. *If* we know any thing of Him,—*if* we may speak of Him in any way,—*if* we may emerge from Atheism or Pantheism into religious faith,—*if* we would have any saving hope, any life of truth and holiness within us,—this only do we know, with this only confession we must begin and end our worship,—that the Father is the One God, the Son the One God, and the Holy Ghost the One God; and that the Father is not the Son, the Son not the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost not the Father.” (p. 353.)

To a faith thus contingent on certain prior assumptions there could be no valid objection, *if* the assumptions themselves are regarded as unconditionally sure. But the fatal thing is this, that every one of them is regarded by the author as an “economy”—as referable not to our knowledge but to our nescience—as rather

a *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* than a genuine "first truth." Reason would as soon suspect as trust them;—nay, it is reason that traces them to their seat in our feebleness and incapacity, and enables us to put the case of their being false. If, in a fit of caprice, you choose to throw them all away and substitute their opposites, no one can show rational cause against you, or dispute the philosophical adequacy of your new hypothesis. *Both* doctrines, atheism and theism, our author more than once intimates, are theories that will hold water. "It is indeed," he says, "a great question whether atheism is not as philosophically consistent with the phenomena of the physical world, taken by themselves, as the doctrine of a creative and governing Power."* In preferring the religious interpretation of the universe, we seize an hypothesis at a venture, impelled by the presumptions of a good heart.

On every account we object to this statement of the ultimate grounds of religion. The author concedes far too much to the atheistic doctrine; and by treating it as an *hypothesis* puts it to a wrong test: for the question is, not whether its premisses, *if true*, will cover the phenomena; but whether its premisses (*e. g.* its notions of Force, Causation, Law) *are true*, or, on the contrary, confused and self-contradictory. He establishes a false variance between the rational and the moral faculties of the soul, and in consequence between philosophical and religious evidence; so that we are made to lose a truth by the one and then recover it by the other. Speculative Reason sends us to the Gazette, but Practical Reason steps in with copious assets and discharges every claim. We dislike to be made the sport of these experiments between imaginary rivals: we object to being drowned in the sea of speculation, just that the Humane Society of practical principles may rub us into life again. The intellectual and the moral functions of our nature have one and the same inspiration,—gain their vision by one and the same light; and it is only by a trick of artificial abstraction that faith can be said to suffer ruin from the one and receive rescue by the other. The postulates of morals stand, in their own right, as first principles in philosophy. But the essential fault of our author's foundation lies in his *Idealism*. That the existence and perfection of God,—that the conflict of moral law with lower nature,—should be no more certain than the reality of an outward world, we may contentedly allow, *provided* that outward world be left to us as an immediate object, positively given to our knowledge by a veracious faculty. This, however, is precisely what Dr. Newman refuses to us. He treats the notion of a material universe as an "unfounded belief," neutral at best as to truth or falsehood. Our moral faith, our

* University Sermons, chiefly on the Theory of Religious Belief, p. 186.

religious faith, he sets on the same footing with our natural realism; and then slips that realism away as a harmless beguilement, "simulating" yet masking the inaccessible fact.* The logical consequence is evident—is probably *meant* to be evident; for sceptical desolation is found to be the best preparative for the shelter of an authoritative church.

The relation of faith to reason is traced by Dr. Newman with a fineness and general truth of discrimination that remind us of Butler.† He rejects the rationalist conceptions of faith, as either the purely intellectual act of believing on testimonial and other secondary evidence, or the purely moral act of carrying out by the will what has been accepted by the understanding. The former confounds it with opinion; the latter with obedience. He does not narrow the term to the Lutheran dimensions, to denote a reliant affection towards a person, and imply a grace peculiar to the Christian and Jewish dispensations. It is a *moral act of reason*, believing, at the instigation of reverence and love, something which goes beyond the severe requirements of the evidence. In matters of pure science, where we have to do with mere nature, the mind simply follows the vestiges of proof. But in concerns of man and God we necessarily carry into every process of judgment antecedent presumptions which colour our whole thought, and interpret for us the external signs given to direct us. To a cold intellect these presumptions will be wanting; and it will construe the spiritual as if it were physical. To a bad heart they will be dark suspicions; and it will believe its own shadow. To an affectionate, faithful, humble mind they will be clear trusts; and it will "think no evil," and "hope all things." It is in this yielding of the reason to the better suggestion—this casting of one's lot with the higher possibility, that faith consists. Obedience to conscience partakes therefore of the nature of faith;‡ and implies, wherever found, a seed of grace and an offer of salvation. The great heathen world is thus brought within the compass of a divine probation; and faithful men, true to their gifts and guidance, are scattered through all lands and ages. It is characteristic of the judgments of faith, that they are immediate and intuitive, detached and unsystematic; whilst those of wisdom are mediate and reflective—the explicit and connected contents of implicit acts of trust. Wisdom is therefore the end of that Christian culture of which faith is the beginning,§ the *ἐπιστήμη* of morals, as opposed to mere *ἀληθὴς δόξα*. It springs from the exercise of Reason on the data of Faith. The same Reason, exercised on the data of Sense and Perception, constitutes

* Ariens of the Fourth Century, pp. 44, 45. University Sermons, p. 350.

† See especially University Sermons, ix. x. xi. Essay on Development, ch. vi. § 2.

‡ University Sermons, ii. p. 19 et seqq.

§ Ibid. xiii. p. 283.

the scientific intellect; whose scrutiny, thus working in *alio genere*, can never alight upon moral discoveries, or replace what has been let slip through non-acceptance of the presumptions of Conscience. Here lies the great mistake of Protestants, who begin with inquiry, expecting to end with faith—"grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles." Catholics, on the other hand, begin with faith, and develop it by inquiry;* reverently taking the divine instincts, and drawing out their hidden oracles into the symmetry of a holy philosophy. In this view the very materials of religious knowledge are present only to the tact of a pure heart; and our author is quite self-consistent when he affirms, in language curiously coinciding with his brother's, that the moral sense—the "spiritual discernment"—is the legitimate judge of religious truth; the intellect having only to prepare the case and watch it with negative and corrective function.†

In its broad features; its linking of moral with religious reverence; its separation of conscience from understanding; its distinction between implicit and explicit truth,—this theory of faith contrasts favourably both with the evangelical no-theory and the rationalist wrong theory. Did the author never quit its systematic statement, or, in quitting it for concrete application, never transgress its terms, we should thank him for removing old errors without remonstrance for introducing new. When, however, we turn from his disquisitions to his tales, and observe the use to which he puts his doctrine in practical life, we start back in dismay, and ask ourselves whether what we had so much approved in thought can issue in what we must utterly disapprove in action? In the sermons we seem to understand the statements, and with full heart assent to them that "faith must *venture something*;" that in order to finish by knowing, you must commence by trusting; that self-surrender in the dark to conscience clears up into open-eyed wisdom. Nor should we seriously object to the exhortation, "*Believe first, and conviction will follow*," so long as we may construe the "belief" to mean simple reliance on *instinctive* impressions of the good and true, and the "conviction," a reflective apprehension of their *ground*; and may therefore read the lesson thus: "You must *do* the right before you can *know* it." First, however, an uneasy wonder stops us when we are told that in early times men became Christians, not *because* they believed, but *in order to believe*;‡ and that the characteristic doctrines of the Gospel were not offered to them till after they had bound themselves to the church by baptism. Next, the real meaning of these ill-favoured general statements becomes shamefully apparent in a particular instance in *Loss and Gain*, where

* *Loss and Gain*, p. 103.

† *University Sermons*, III. pp. 40, 44, 45.

‡ *Arians*, p. 78. *Loss and Gain*, p. 343.

the hero, a puzzled Protestant, unsatisfied with English church-parties, but an entire stranger to the Romanist system and worship, is passionately urged by a recently "perverted" friend to take his hat and walk straight away into confession and adoption. He does not at the moment yield to the advice; but a little later he follows it, without any great advance in his mental preparation, and before ever witnessing a service in a Catholic church. Thus is the word "*faith*" degraded to the sense of "trying the experiment of an unknown religion, and obeying it at hazard;" and has no further reference to *conscience*, which stands quite neutral towards a church not yet appreciated. There is still, however, a lower step to be taken. Dr. Newman does not attempt to disguise the shock given to the moral feeling and taste of newcomers by many things inseparable from Romanism. How does he counsel them to deal with their distress? To respect it as a sacred sign? to follow their own highest perception at all risks? No; but to suppress and smother it; to consider that they must not expect to get through without dirt, and to hope that things will look cleaner when the eye has become used to them. And this, *proh pudor!* he also calls "*faith*;" having at last turned it right round, and brought it to mean the *contradiction* of conscience,—the placid swallowing of what is offensive to the moral sense. In short, he makes it convertible with mere "*taking on trust*," without regard to the felt *quality* of the thing taken. Whether you yield to what commands, or to what scandalises, your natural reverence, you equally satisfy the conditions of our author's "*faith*." The word thus becomes an engine that will work either in advance or in reverse: whether you believe your conscience or disbelief, it keeps you on the pious track.

The practice of professing a creed "*in order to believe*" has long been a favourite with the castistry of Oxford. Arnold, troubled with doubts about the doctrine of the Trinity, was recommended by his friend Keble to take a parish, and avow the doctrine several times per week, and multiply the meshes of his entanglement with it. Every Oxford tutor, we believe, could quote instances in which scepticism of greater extent has been met with similar advice. Without discussing the pleas advanced in defence of such counsels, we will test their character by an imaginary case, exhibiting the conditions in the simplest form. In a religious and highly accomplished family, connected on all hands with the church, an erring son, let us suppose, becomes enamoured of the "*doctrine of circumstances*;" and passing through the mere fatalistic stage, settles into resolute and open-eyed atheism. No nobleness of character or confusion of thought beguiles him (as happier natures are beguiled) into the illusion that moral distinctions remain when divine realities are gone:

and his life exhibits no violent inconsistency with a creed which disclaims responsibility. Among his numerous clerical connections, one, we will suppose, is captivated with the new formula, that men are to become members of the church not "because they believe, but in order to believe:" and, acting on this rule, addresses him to the following effect: "You say you disbelieve the existence of a God; but you are in no condition to judge, for you have never tried the hypothesis of theism. Your first step must be to grant it for experiment's sake, to act *as if* there were a God, and become a *quasi*-Christian. Join the church; diligently profess the creeds; take the sacrament; be constant in your prayers; expostulate with the heresies of others; and in due time *belief will follow*." It is easier, perhaps, to conceive such counsels offered than to imagine them accepted. For completeness' sake, however, let us suppose their influence for the moment to prevail. A sudden transformation is visible. The atheist looks up his prayer-book, and is seen twice a day at church: he audibly says, "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, &c.;" he bows to the east at the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; he hears the warning from the altar to "search his own conscience" "*not* after the manner of *dissemblers with God*," and answers it by boldly partaking at "the holy table." He plays the Pharisee towards pure and pious friends, needing his rebuke for their "neological" tendencies. His fictitious zeal at last outstrips the pace of his spiritual counsellor; to whom he points out certain worldly-minded friends as requiring to be brought to a "sense of their condition." The clergyman declining so delicate an office, the spell of his influence is broken; his hopeful novice throws up with disgust "the hypothesis of a God," relapses into the atheism which had never really left him for an hour: and "Richard is himself again."

That we have not misconceived the natural issue of this sort of experiment, critics of human nature will perhaps allow. That the experiment itself is a legitimate offspring of the parent maxim, the logical reader will hardly question. But between logic and life, it will be said, bridges are scarce; and, in practice, these extreme cases never find the means to cross. Those who speak thus can have had little access to the inner history of the present age. When the time comes for its sincerest biographies to appear, the truth will often prove "stranger than our fiction."

The theory of Christianity which Dr. Newman's writings present deserved better at his hands than to be given as an hypothesis and an "economy." Stript of perverse adjuncts, and checked at its points of deflection, it assumes the aspect of a religious philosophy, combining, with an unusual sense of proportion, the chief truths of Christian morals and faith. In its

results it concurs, of course, with the Catholic doctrines; but it brings them out in fresh connections and with reference all round to the rival teachings, from the midst of which the expositor himself has emerged into them. The briefest notice of the main features must content us.

The human soul cannot lose its essentially moral constitution. Free and responsible still in the heathen notwithstanding the fall, and in the Christian though brought under grace, it has never sunk below the capacity, and never rises above the obligation, of obedience. The sense of duty is intrinsically the highest authority,—the ultimate ground of all ecclesiastical pretensions. The “objective authority” of the church, which is peculiar to revealed religion, would have nothing to rest upon, were it not for the prior “subjective authority” of conscience, which belongs to natural religion. The dispensations of God are not, therefore, restricted to the Hebrew course of history: they are universal as the human conscience, and every man has his trust of light and grace. Even special revelation must be regarded as probably given at different times to all nations; no tribe being without traditions of supernatural events. The distinction in favour of the Jewish race is simply that with it alone have the facts been preserved by authentic records and media. And as the inspiration of God is not restricted by limits of place, so neither does it die out with time. He speaks to us still, and enables us to add to our store; not, indeed, by taking any new point of departure, but developing and applying the divine data,—by resolving the vision and concrete thought of the Son of God into the component ideas and living truths which it yields to holy reflection.

In its very nature religious truth is *self-evidencing*,—evolved from the mind rather than deposited on it: and the care of the teacher or the church must be directed less to any intellectual elaboration of proof than to prepare the temper and posture of the receiving soul, and waken into consciousness the elementary experiences of reverence and faith. Christianity itself is self-evidencing, and by its inherent power makes way where no books of evidences could carry it. Indeed, *all* its doctrines are really given, and have actually been found, in natural religion. Only they came to wise and good heathens on the vague authority of a divine *principle*, instead of a divine *agent*. The one grand gift of the Gospel to the human mind is that, by the Incarnation, it has determined the *personality* of God, and His relations of *character and affection* towards man. *This*, and not what is called the “doctrine of the Cross,” is the specialty and living kernel of the Gospel.

Christianity, however, is not adequately described as a revelation of truth; or even as a saving transaction: rather is it (in-

clusively, indeed, of these) a divine Institute in perpetuity for helping man to "cleanse himself from sin." His fallen nature, though not ruined or bereft of its free-will, is in a state of moral infirmity, requiring supernatural aids; and these the Christian economy provides. First, the Son of God became incarnate, "*non amittendo quod erat, sed sumendo quod non erat*," reconciling infinitude with personality, and purifying the nature He adopted and through whose experiences He passed. Next, the sacrificial merits of this act are distributed by a perpetual re-incarnation in the Eucharist, and, with modifications, by the other sacraments, as vehicles of grace. But again, the spiritual purification which is thus freely given to faith for *past* evil does not close the contingencies of the *future*. Only in proportion as the grace of faith leads to works and love, is it effectual for the time to come: so that the retrospect on Redemption does not close the prospect of Retribution, and within the Gospel there is still a Law. Baptism, which washes out all prior sin, cannot be repeated: and subsequent transgressions must be cleansed away either by the penances and absolution of the church, or by the expiations of purgatory. Throughout his doctrine our author provides a responsible place for the human will, and constructs a true "*moral theology*." His antithesis between grace and nature shows itself, not by opposing faith to morality, but by importing into morals an interior contrast between the tastes of the natural and of the religious conscience; the latter going beyond the mere human rectitudes, and producing ascetic virtues,—regarding life as penitential and expiatory, if not endowed with positive and blessed promise to self-sacrifice.

On the mere Romanist appendages to this scheme,—the Invocation of saints, the Mariolatry, the Apostolic Succession, &c.—we mean to say nothing. They are chiefly remarkable for having raised up in their defence the obnoxious but highly important "*doctrine of development*." In the absence of any plausible support from Scripture, it became necessary, if they were to be retained at all, to widen the source of doctrine, and give an interpreting and determining power to the church. In order to reconcile Protestants to this, it was maintained that for them too, not less than for the Catholics, the letter of the Bible was insufficient, unless read by the reflected light of later ecclesiastical decisions. Neither the doctrine of the Trinity, nor the usage of Infant Baptism, could be gathered from the sacred writings alone. Such questions as those respecting an intermediate state and the remission of past-baptismal sins are raised, but not solved, by the Gospels. Nor can Scripture determine its own canon, or its own inspiration. To set it up as a self-sufficing objective authority, is to apply it to a purpose for which it is not intended or adapted.

On the other hand, traces abound upon its page that it has been composed on the principle of development, that is, with a view to an ulterior determination of many things which it leaves indeterminate. The statement of the Logos-doctrine in the poem of St. John's Gospel is but the germ in which the true doctrine of Christ's higher nature lies: and till successive heresies had started the questions dormant within it, and given occasion for a verdict on them, the right solution could not disengage itself from the possible wrong ones. The prophecies quoted from the Jewish Scriptures in the Christian seem inapplicable, till we are furnished with the double meaning or non-natural sense; and to bring this fully out required the experience of a later time, when the necessary tendency of literal and historical interpretation to Arian rationalism had been made evident in the exegetical school of Antioch, and the connection of the mystical method with orthodoxy and piety had displayed itself in the catechetical school of Alexandria. From all these symptoms it is gathered, that the Christian system, not excepting its primary principles, is only implicitly given in the canonical books; that the seed of truth, once consigned to human souls as its receptacle, more and more clearly evinced its nature and discriminated its species by the growths into which it opened; that the tact of the church in recognising the genuine characters, and in rejecting the spurious or mixed, became finer with continued exercise, and the aid of prior definitions; that instead of testing the later by the earlier, we are to interpret the earlier by the later, and import the explicit doctrines of the fourth and fifth centuries into the rudimentary expressions of the first. Protestants must either denude their creed to its mere embryo, or let it assume the proportions of full-blown Romanism.

The state of this controversy is curious. The assumption on both sides is, that *either* the Bible or the Church is impregnable, and achieves all our protection from error for us: the only question is, *which* of the two it is. To put this to the test, each party tries to discredit the favourite refuge of the other. Dr. Newman does not scruple to discharge a volley into the intrenchment of Scripture, in order to show the Protestants that it may be made too hot to hold them, and "compel them to come in" to his stronghold. They reply by a hot fire at his church-bastions, to convince him that they may be knocked about his head. Is it surprising if both are pretty well riddled; if neither is found to be designed for the purpose to which it has been applied; and if a change of the whole ground should be the clearly indicated result? By *no* documentary process, no construction of title-deeds, be they canonical or ecclesiastical, of the first century or the fourth, can you draw forth the oracular system which you

seek. Rail off what plot of history you will, the human, with all its liabilities, will be there. Wander where you will on its unenclosed spaces, the divine, with its eternal teaching, will not be absent. For discriminating the true from the false, the accidental from the essential, in morals and religion, whether drawn from the special Christian data, or from the entire life of humanity, something more is needed than to draw an arbitrary line round a select group of books, or a favoured series of centuries. "Objective authority" in religion there doubtless is ; but vested in a Person who is eternal, and not therefore a fixture of chronology ; speaking to us through *all* the media of His life in humanity, and not therefore separable from the "subjective authority" of conscience, or discoverable without it ; and though uniquely manifested in the "Word made flesh," yet owned by us even there only through the same Word in hearts already tintured with the Christian consciousness.

Looking back on the whole influence of Dr. Newman's personality and writings, we see in it a great preponderance of good. Bishop Thirlwall has justly acknowledged that the Oxford movement has given rise to more valuable writings in theology than had appeared for a long time previous to it. And though it arrested the pursuit of critical theology for a while, the postponement was amply compensated by a newly-awakened attention to the whole history of Christianity, and a far more searching look into the moral and spiritual conditions and effects of faith in the human soul. The prosecution of the critical theology will be resumed with larger, humbler, yet freer spirit, now that some deeper root has been found for Christian obedience and belief than an authority wholly external and contingent on a literary tenure. A sense of the universality and perpetuity of Divine grace,—of the sanctity of common duties and self-denials,—of the grandeur and power of historical communion and church-life,—of the true place of beauty and art in worship,—has deeply penetrated into the newer religion of England ;—chiefly, it is true, among the classes within reach of academical modes of thought and feeling, but through them affecting the administration of parishes and manors out of number. For the reunion of religious and moral ends,—for the reconciliation of human admirations with holy reverence,—for the consecration of the near and temporal,—many a heart owes a debt of unspeakable gratitude to the literature of the Oxford school. The one grand sin which we must set off against these merits, is a certain want of unconditional and ultimate trust in their own principles. Their system has too often the appearance of being constructed on purpose as a refuge from doubts they dare not face. Their intellectual men have been fond of playing with fire, and flinging

about brilliant scepticisms, eating into the very heart of life, for the chance of inducing flight into their protecting fold. It is hard for a proselyte of terror to become a child of trust: and the brand of *fear* deforms the forehead of this party. "To obey," they say, "is easier than to believe: so we will begin from the conscience, that we may end with assurance." Good: but see that you obey out of the belief you *have*, instead of *with a view to a belief which you have not*. Conscience has a right to you through and through, and must be served without terms: and vainly do you mount her sacred steps on knees of painful penance, if the thought of your heart be to escape from the outer exposures and threatening skies of doubt; into the shelter of a ready temple and the sympathy of a mighty throng. The deepest form of scepticism is seen in the mind which is in haste to believe; which resolves, by some violent spring, to make an end of darkness, whether the light attained be God's or not; which is not content to follow precisely and *only* where He shows, and cannot rest upon the trustful word, "My soul, wait *patiently* for Him." Something of this *unfaith* lurks in the spirit of the new Catholic party. They recognise the ambassadorial credentials of Conscience, and show you on its casket of secrets the very signet of the King of kings:—on opening the despatch-box, you find they have stuffed in all the creeds. The self-deception involved in this is not always unmixed with artifice. All such policy is a half-conscious attempt to suborn God's Spirit on behalf of our own desires and prejudices, and against the doubts and scruples which may be truly His.

Transferring ourselves now from Oxford to Cambridge, we acknowledge at the outset that the *place* has much less to do with the party, in the case of the philosophical movement led by Coleridge, than in that of the ecclesiastical represented by Newman. Yet it was before the University of Cambridge that Julius Hare* first produced the fruits of his meditations at the feet of the poet-philosopher: and it was in Trinity College chapel that he preached the sermons which mark most clearly his theological position.† The Highgate sage had gone to his rest at the very beginning of the Oxford movement (in 1834), and left his disciples to deal with the phenomenon according to their own lights. Mr. Hare had visited the Eternal City, and witnessed there some things which indisposed him to trifle with the honest heart of Protestantism. "I saw the Pope," he used to say, "apparently kneeling in prayer for mankind: but the legs which kneeled were artificial; he was in his chair. Was not that sight enough

* Sermon on "the Children of Light," preached before the University in 1828.

† Sermon on "the Law of Self-sacrifice," 1829; and Sermon on "the Sin against the Holy Ghost," in 1832.

to counteract all the æsthetical impressions of the worship, if they had been a hundred times stronger than they were?"* He saw at once the part that he should take; and in his first sermon, preached before the clergy of the diocese of Chichester, he vindicated, from the words, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," the living presence of the invisible Word in His own Person against the sacerdotal delegation claimed, and virtually substituted, by the Tractarians. Profoundly Lutheran in his conception of "faith," and jealous of all interposed media between the Church and her Divine Head, he resisted at the outset the dangers of an official theocracy with an absent God. The offence given to some hearers by this sermon made him hesitate for a time to accept the office of Archdeacon of Lewes. But in overruling his objections, Bishop Otter rightly interpreted the character of his mind; of which the recent sermon was only a partial expression; and which, though impulsive and unsystematic, had too many open and susceptible sides, too rich a culture, and too real a spiritual depth, to restrict its sympathies to any exclusive party.

In fact, the polemic attitude for the moment assumed towards the Anglicans by no means expressed the characteristic of his school. A much deeper and earlier antipathy had called it into existence, and shaped it into form. Coleridge, as all his readers are aware, was in early life a preacher among the Unitarians. Though never having a permanent pastoral charge among them, he was once on the point of settling as a minister at Shrewsbury: and, in withdrawing, he assures the congregation that, while he prefers a freer mode of life, "active zeal for Unitarian Christianity, not indolence or indifference, has been the motive of my declining a local and stated settlement as a preacher of it."† His early poems, and the name of his eldest son, attest the fervour with which he embraced the philosophy of Priestley and Hartley, as well as the "Psilanthropism" of the sect. By the side of the French atheism of the day, these opinions wore a conservative aspect towards Christianity; in the presence of the political "Church-and-King" vulgarity, they seemed generous to liberty; in the total oblivion of deeper speculation, and the absolute dominance of physical method, they satisfied the demand for compactness and system in philosophy. But only the dearth of other waters, and the parching of that desert time, could detain him at this spring. His natural thirst was ever feeling its way to

* See Introduction, page xxvi. (understood to be by Mr. Maurice) to the *Visitation Charges of the Archdeacon of Lewes*, in the years 1843, 1845, 1846; a charming sketch of Hare's character and position, as rich and wise as it is affectionate.

† Letter, dated Shrewsbury, Jan. 19, 1798, to Mr. Isaac Wood, High Street, Shrewsbury. *Christian Reformer* for 1834, page 840.

more congenial fountains. His speculative creed had never penetrated the unconscious essence of the man, but lay as a texture about him, without growing into the fibres of his heart. In 1796, he records, in a private letter, his experience under sore affliction : " My philosophical refinements and metaphysical theories lay by me in the hour of anguish as toys by the bedside of a child deadly sick."* Never, in short, was the genius of a man more out of its element. An infirm will, a dreamy ideality, a preternatural subtlety of thought, and intense religious susceptibility, were thrown among a people eminently practical and prosaic, impatient of romance, indifferent to intellectual refinements, strict in their moral expectations, scrupulous of the veracities but afraid of the fervours of devotion. The strength and the weakness of each party were vehemently antipathic to those of the other : and their inevitable divergence once begun, the alienation became rapidly complete. Coleridge was a born Platonist, who could not permanently rest content, with Locke, to seek all knowledge in phenomena, or, with Paley, all good in happiness : and on the first opening of his cage of experience, he darted out, and took to his metaphysic wing.

It was Kant who first lifted the bar and set him free ; and who, with Schelling, inspired him to seize that border territory between psychology and theology, which had long been declared a dream-land. If any where the relationship can be really witnessed between the human spirit and the divine, it must be on the awful confines of the two ; and by taking stand on the ground of our highest consciousness, we may perhaps be able to pass to and fro across the line, and find the breadth of any common margin there may be, and note where, on the one hand, it sinks into pure Nature, and on the other, rises into the absolute God. Here, then, he worked in both directions,—upwards and downwards,—till the two tracks met : with results which, so far as our present object is concerned, may be briefly indicated.

Dr. Newman has himself drawn attention to a remarkable concurrence between his own conceptions and Coleridge's, respecting the sources and limits of natural religion in the human mind.† They agree in seeking the germ of devout belief in the experiences of conscience ; in recognising the essentially religious character of morality ; in making faith the prior condition of spiritual knowledge, and vindicating the maxim, *Credo, ut intelligam*. Newman, however, represents the moral feeling more as a blind instinctive *datum* to be accepted ; Coleridge, more as cognitive power, looking on reality with open eye. And

* Letter to Mr. Benjamin Flower, Editor of the Cambridge Intelligencer. Monthly Repository for 1834, page 654.

h. l.† University Sermons, II. p. 24, note.

further, with Newman there is *no other* original spring of divine knowledge: while Coleridge allows us an intellectual as well as a moral organ for the apprehension of God. Beyond and above the *Understanding*, which generalises from the data of perception, gathers laws from phenomena, frames rules from experience, traces logical consequence and adapts means to ends, he enthrones the *Reason*, which seizes a different *order* of truths—viz. the necessary and universal,—in themselves inconceivable, in their absence contradictory; and in a different *way*—viz. intuitively and immediately, not mediately or through a process. The former (*Verstand*) has the field of *Nature* (that which is *born*,—the originated and transient) for its *object*, and belongs to our *natural part* as its *seat*; and is therefore not peculiar to us, but shared by other animal races,—whose so-called “instinct” is not specifically distinguishable from adaptive intelligence. The latter (*Vernunft*) has the realm of *Spirit* (the *super-natural*, to which the predicates of time and space are inapplicable) for its object, and for its seat in us our spirit or supernatural part. Had we, in combination with our sentient capacity, only understanding, though in ever so eminent a degree, we should remain mere living *things*,—with an honourable place in the records of natural history, but leaving the registers of morals and religion still blank and clasped. The Reason by which a higher life becomes possible divaricates into two functions,—the cognitive and the active; the former giving the roots of all our Ontological thinking,—the ideas of Cause, of Unity, of Infinitude, &c.; the latter furnishing the postulates of all Moral action,—the ideas of Freedom, of Personality, of Obligation. Both the speculative and the practical reason have a voice in our primary religious faith. But the former, alone and by itself, would give us merely an ontological “*One*,” a Spinozistic Absolute,—the residuary God of the *à priori* demonstrations: necessitating, no doubt, a self-subsistent Infinite of which atheism can render no account, but leaving us unassured how far predicates of character may be transferred to its mysterious subject. Hence the chief application of speculative reason in theology must always be critical rather than creative; to slay in single combat each successive foe that may arise; but not to proclaim *for whom* it is that the champion stands, and for ever keeps the field. On the other hand, the practical reason or conscience reveals to us the *Holy* God, who is the proper and positive object of our faith; who is doubtless more or less clearly apprehended in proportion to the purity of our discerning and reflecting faculty, but who lurks suspected or half-perceived in the darkest hearts;—if no otherwise, at least in their fears and compunctions: for “remorse is the implicit creed of the guilty.”

The will, as empowered to carry out the ideas of Reason in the realm of Sense,—to make Spirit of avail in Nature,—is by its very function *super-natural*, and cannot be entangled as a constituent in the very system which it is to influence from above. Only the divinely-free can achieve that passage. A footman will run your errand across the town; but it needs a winged Iris or a sandalled Hermes to bear the messages of gods to men. It is precisely in the *freedom of the will* that a person is distinguished from a thing, and becomes a possible subject of moral law. And so is it in the recognition of a good other than the sentient, of an authority transcending all personal preference, of a right over us and our whole cargo of "happiness," actual and potential, that the sense of Duty and the conditions of morality begin. Hence Edwards and the necessarians, Priestley and the materialists, Paley and the Epicureans, depict a universe from which all moral qualities and beings, divine or human, are excluded: and whether reasoning down from God as absolute *Sovereign*, or up from man as simply *sentient*, miss whatever is august and holy in its life.

From the distinction drawn between nature and spirit, it follows that there cannot be such a thing as "*natural* religion." All religion must be *spiritual*, springing as it does exclusively within the supernatural element of us. Nay, more; all religion must be *revealed*, if by that word we mean, "*directly given by Divine communication*," as opposed to mediate discovery of our own. For what and whence are those primary ideas of conscience which constitute or presuppose our deepest, though not our fullest, faith? Are they of our own making?—of our own finding? Have we any thing to do with their genesis? Do they not report to us of the necessary and eternal? And are they not the presence with us of that Eternal, whereof assuredly nothing temporal and finite can report? Is there not profound truth as well as piety in the couplet:

"None but Thy wisdom knows Thy might:
None but Thy Word can speak Thy name!"

The reason *in* us is not *personal* to us, but only the manifestation in our consciousness of the infinite reason, presenting us with its supernatural realities, and intrusting to our will their divine rights over our world. It is thus the common ground of the divine and the human, the essential base of their communion, the Logos which is at once the objective truth and the subjective knowledge of God.

These results have thus far been reached psychologically, by beginning with the data of the human soul and tracing their indications upward. But, to meet it, Coleridge also descends, by an ontological track, from the Absolute One to His expression in

the finite,—a Platonic Logos or Son of God ; to whom we are to refer at once the physical kosmos, the divine process in history, and the intimations of reason and conscience. Through this mediator, found alike at the foot of our speculative dialectic and at the summit of our moral analytic, do God and man meet and sustain living relations.

But St. John identifies this Logos with the historical Christ ; in whom, therefore, the Infinite reaches not only finite, but concrete and personal manifestation. It is the glory and joy of our humanity that He took it into Himself ; and conquering sin in it, purified it, and gave it a seed of higher life. Through uttermost self-sacrifice, He reconciled its deepest sorrows with complete perfection ; redeemed it and drew it to God ; and made manifest in time the eternal facts of His infinite love,—His personal union with our nature,—and the law of self-sacrifice as the deliverance of His universe.

If we rightly understand the theologians of this school, they do not intend, when they speak of the divine assumption of our nature, to limit their reference to the individual life of Jesus of Nazareth. The Son is united not with this or that particular man only, but with humanity itself as a type ; and constitutes, as He ever has constituted, the ground and life of all its good. The blending of the two natures is not a biographical but an "eternal" fact, belonging to the essence of their relation. The particular Incarnation of the evangelical history "*reveals and realises*" the universal truth ; to which all its exceptional and marking features,—miraculous birth, agony and crucifixion, resurrection and ascension,—stand related as symbols to the reality,—as passing phenomena that tell the tale of an eternity. They are, indeed, more than this ; because they are not,—as symbols may be,—mere signs or instruments of suggestion ; but are homogeneous with the thing signified, and integrated with it as its highest momenta.

Following out this interpretation of the redemptive operation of the Son, we may conceive of it in two ways : as in reality always going on, although unrecognised ; and as at length revealed in a plenary Incarnation, so as to be henceforth turned out from the unconscious to the conscious state. This last change is in itself a spiritual revolution of the highest order,—like the burst of a universe only felt, and by inches, before, on the eye touched by the finger of Christ. By ceasing to be latent,—by being given to our faith,—the redeeming agency is at once raised to a higher power. Now that we know *who* it is that pleads and strives with our evil nature, we can freely go to meet Him, and He may act from *within* our will as well as from without. His life-giving energy is quite another thing,—since not a *thing* at

all, but a person,—not even a “better self,” but a Divine other-than-self; and confers upon the soul a “*new birth*.” From the life of nature, conscious of only Self disturbed by an impersonal law, we emerge into the life of the spirit, set free by faith, and admitted to personal communion of trust and love. The transition into the “new birth” is the chief element in the redemptive act of the Son. The continuous power of holier life in the heart thus regenerate is the sign and function of the Holy Spirit. Both these,—the crisis of change and its spiritual sequel,—are indeed full of mystery on their objective or Divine side. But from the subjective or human side it is easy to perceive how the consciousness of a Divine Person blended with the humanity of each of us, and the source in it of whatever is higher than we, may be really a new seed of life within us, giving us a holy living Object in place of a repulsive ethical abstraction, and awakening all the powerful affections that ever seek a Personal Centre of repose.

From the whole complexion of this scheme it will be gathered, that the Original Sin countervailed by redemption is not *birth-sin* (which would be natural *disease*, not *moral* evil); and that the redemption is not an extinction of punishment, but a deliverance from sin. It is not that God is paid off, but that man emerges “a new creature.” The “evil ground” there is in the human will,—the downward gravitation of self,—the need of a Diviner to draw us to any good by the sacrifice of self,—are simple facts accessible to every man’s self-knowledge. And we are well aware that, coexisting with our free agency, they are not our malady, but our fault. Coleridge and his school every where denounce the Calvinistic doctrines of hereditary depravity and of penal satisfaction, as turning man from a person into a thing, and denying to God all moral attributes. The primary conditions of any true theory of redemption are, that the whole operation takes place on humanity; and that it both finds and leaves man a free agent. Neither of these conditions is complied with by any form of the Calvinistic scheme.

Some of the peculiarities of Coleridge most familiar to theologians,—his tetrads and pentads, his doctrine of Church and State, his denial of the documentary inspiration of the whole Bible,—we pass by; not from any slighting estimate of their importance as parts of an organic whole, but in order to insulate the one character,—of *religious Realism*,—which is the inner essence of the system itself, and the living seed of its development in the school of Mr. Maurice. It is chiefly from inapprehension of this character, and from the inveterate training of the English mind in the opposite habit of thought, that so many readers complain of obscurity in the writings of the Chaplain of

Lincoln's Inn. We do not deny that his meaning is at times difficult to reach ; for it is apt to be *delayed* too long by his scrupulous candour of concession, his modest shrinking from self-assertion, his preference of the sympathetic to the distinctive attitude. But we venture with some confidence to assert, that for consistency and completeness of thought, and precision in the use of language, it would be difficult to find his superior among living theologians. It is the old question,—what do you mean by a *clear* or *distinct* thought? Do you mean a mental *image* or *representation* of something, like your conception of a perceptible object or of a finite portion of space or time? Then certainly you will not cease to complain of Mr. Maurice's indistinctness ; for he speaks and thinks of Spirit, and Righteousness, and God, as realities without mental picture and yet closely known ; and he treats the notions of Infinity and Eternity as something else than "negative ideas,"—the finite and the temporal with all the meaning emptied out. If, however, by "clearness of idea" you mean, not "*the idea of a limit*," but "*a limit to the idea*,"—if your conditions are satisfied, provided thought does not run into thought, but each keeps its own place and function with exactitude,—then you might as reasonably charge indistinctness on Mr. Mill or Archbishop Whately as on Mr. Maurice. Many parts of his doctrine we are quite unable to follow with assent ; but we see no excuse for the absurd distortions of his peculiar Christianity, with which the party-organs of Church and Sect have long abounded. Critics who have read any one of his practical or historical essays, with some feeling of its clear and life-like charm, ought surely to know that if his theology seems difficult to them, it cannot be from his want of practised thought and literary skill, and must arise from their not having at present found his latitude.

Coleridge, commencing in reaction from a scheme of materialistic necessity, gave great prominence to his assertion of free-agency. Not till he had effectually set humanity on its feet again, did he proceed to identify the intimations of its moral reason with the indwelling life of the Divine Word. Mr. Maurice is caught up by this last thought, and has become its organ to the present age ; and so intensely does it possess him, that we fear his losing sight too much of the prior truth from which the start was made, and reducing man into a mere prize, to be contended for between the Satan and the God within him. Pushing the claims of a diabolical being far into the evil phenomena of our nature, and those of a Divine Being over the whole of the good, he thins away the space for the free human personality till it becomes at times quite evanescent. This is a danger ever incident to the wish of humility, that nothing should be claimed

for self,—that all should be referred to God. But it must be restrained from reaching its ultimate limit; or else the ground of morals sinks again away, and, in pantheistic guise, universal necessity absorbs us all once more. We say, “in pantheistic guise;” for, be it observed, the two personalities—the Human and the Divine—must ever appear and disappear *together*: they are the two terms of a relation which wholly vanishes on the merging of either; and though, with safety to both, there is room for considerable variety in the theory of their respective functions, yet should an eye of reverential caution be kept (especially in our day) on the limits of the problem where the foci fall into each other. If, however, Mr. Maurice has too nearly approached this danger, it is under the inspiration of a truth than which there is no greater. The assumption of humanity by the Eternal Word may be construed from above downwards, so as to illustrate the character and agency of God; or from below upwards, so as to throw light on the spiritual experiences of man. In the former view, it gives to our trust and worship One whose chosen life is in our spirits, who moulds us into unities not our own,—of family, of nation, of church,—who is not wearied by our perverseness, but, still pressing His righteousness upon us, is ever redeeming what else were lost. In the latter view, a singular sanctity is imparted to the inner facts of our own existence and the invisible springs of the world’s history. All that we inadequately call our *ideals*, the gleaming lights of good that visit us, the hopes that lift again our fallen wills, the beauty which Art cannot represent, the holiness which life does not realise, the love which cannot die with death,—what are they? Not *our* higher, but a *higher than we*—the living Guide Himself, pleading with us and asking for our trust. The actual and concrete, on the other hand, which falls so immeasurably short of these fair types,—the false fact that lies ashamed beneath the true vision,—*that* is our poor *self*; in which is nothing but failure, disappointment, and negation. One simple and only thing is asked from us: to cease trusting this delusive self and go freely into the Hand that waits for us,—to exchange the tension of volition for the quiet of unreserved surrender,—to pass from the chafing mood of “works” to the still heart of “faith.” The great original sin of our nature is, that we reverse this order,—that we rely on ourselves and are afraid of God, and accordingly seek, by some act of ours, to buy Him off and be rid of His terrors and persuade Him to let us alone. Whether men endeavour to propitiate Him by relinquishing something that they have, or to serve Him by something that they do, they mistake their position, and measure themselves off against Him as if they had proprietary rights which they could abandon in His favour, or

some availing righteousness which could satisfy His moral perception. They aim at acting upon Him : and He is wanting to act on them ; and will persist till they drop their gifts, and know their failures, and freely come to Him as they are to be moulded by His thought. It was to bring about this removal of distrust towards God, to reveal the law of self-abnegation as Divine and supreme, that the Word became flesh, and passed through its grievous incidents, and entered into sympathetic pity for its sins and fears. The most alienated feeling, once apprehending this manifestation of Divine adoption, could hold out no more. Such an Incarnation, bringing to a focus the perpetual truth of the "God with us," is not a humiliation of the divine nature so much as the glory and joy of the human, and discloses to us not a fallen world but a redeemed, with whose resistance the "Spirit of holiness" will not for ever have to strive. It harmonises with "the belief that man is not an animal carrying about a soul, but a spiritual being with an animal nature, who, when he has sunk lowest into that nature, has still thoughts and recollections of a home to which he belongs, and from which he has wandered."*

The same mode of thought by which the individual life is thus turned into a sanctuary exhibits human society as in its essence a theocracy ; and wins for the experiences and polity of the Hebrew race, as particular embodiments of a universal method, a meaning which Lessing's hints ought long ago to have elicited. Not that we mean to press at all closely the analogy between the doctrine of the "Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament," and the "Thoughts on the Education of the Human Race." They are alike in this : that they pull down the fences which had detached the Hebrew life from the great territory of human history, and find a universal function for even what is most exceptional in it. In their mode of procedure, however, they differ : Lessing seeking in the career of the Jewish people the rudiments of an *unfolding* idea ; Maurice, the witness to *eternal* truths,—the manifestation by time-samples of infinite realities and unchanging relations. And this difference touches a characteristic of the living divine, which more than any other makes him a perplexity to his contemporary critics. So strong in most Englishmen is the "natural man," as habitually to assume, till they discover whither the maxim leads, that "all we know is phenomena ;" or rather they turn all they know *into* phenomena, and contemplate nothing "under the form of eternity." Even their theology is no exception. They *dramatise* it ; drawing it out into an *economy* or plot, with different scenes,

* Hare's Charges, Introduction, p. xxi.

and progressive action, and crises of terror and of rescue, and a grand catastrophe to wind up the whole. Now the elements and incidents of this plan Mr. Maurice takes out of series, and redistributes in synchronous (or rather in timeless) relations. States of *humanity* which we are apt to represent as successive, and to string together as passages of an historical process, he treats as always coexistent in all men,—as abiding attributes or affections of their being. "Original sin," for instance, is not, in his view, a *prior* condition, giving way to "reconciliation" as a *posterior*; but both exist together in all men. And so too *Divine* states, which we are commonly taught to dispose chronologically, cease with him to be separate. Christ the Saviour is usually believed to have first come at the "advent," and to be identical in date with Jesus of Nazareth. But, in Mr. Maurice's view, there never was a time when our race was not equally the abode of His "real presence." "Man, according to his original constitution, was related to Christ;"* who was *in* the heathen world while they were bowing to gods of wood and stone, and *in* Saul while yet the persecutor. The conversion on Damascus' road, and the whole historical gospel, did but *reveal* a Divine person that had never been absent from our humanity. There was not—first, a lost Heathendom; and then, to replace it, a redeemed Christendom: but always, and throughout both, One who was and is redeeming; and many, alas, in each, who resist this recall of them from their outer darkness. This abolition of time-conditions, and redistribution of the same facts as essential and permanent realities, gives the true key to our author's most difficult writings. The transmutation it effects in the doctrine of "eternal punishment" is but one example of its marvellous power of rejuvenescence applied to a theology grown decrepit in routine.

The great strength of this school lies, we think, in its faithful interpretation of what is at once deepest and highest in the religious consciousness of men; and its recognition, in this consciousness, of a concrete and living Divine person, instead of mere abstractions without authority, or the dreams of unreliable imagination. And we may well be grateful for a scheme which establishes a *uniform constitution* of our nature and our world, in *steady* relation to supernatural realities, broken by no revolutionary jerks or local exemptions; and which, therefore, opens a welcome to a scientific ethic, and metaphysic, and history. Nor is its strength merely that of fair promise and earnest appeal. So long as it advances on the ground of religious philosophy, it appears to us to make its footing good; and the first questionable step is, perhaps, at the point where it enters *history*, and

* The Doctrine of Sacrifice. Dedicatory Letter, p. 21.

hands itself over from Plato to St. John. The identification of the eternal Logos with the historical Christ is at present left to rest upon external authority alone,—and *that* too the authority of a single evangelist. A thoughtful learner in this school might be brought by some Alexandrine Coleridge into a faith like Philo's in the Divine Word, and set within the spiritual forecourt of this gospel. He might next, on testimonial grounds, be led to receive the whole evangelical series of external facts from Bethlehem to the Mount of Ascension. And yet these two termini of his belief might remain in painful discontinuity: and we do not see that the links of relation have hitherto been adequately supplied. If the whole stress is to be laid on the doctrine of the fourth gospel, the question becomes an anxious one, how far the evangelist's thought has taken its complexion from the Master's discourses,—how far infused it into them. For surely, without reopening the discussion of authorship at all, the complete equalisation of tone in this gospel between the discourses and the narrative, rendering it often impossible to mark the boundary between them, is a fact of the utmost moment,—in itself accounted for in either way: and if the discourses are as *unlike* those in the other gospels as they are *like* the personal composition of St. John, the hypothesis most assuring to us respecting their historical character is at an undeniable disadvantage. Shifted from the authentication of Christ himself to that of even "the beloved disciple," the Incarnation of the Logos in Jesus (in the sense required by the theory) would rest on too doubtful a support: for who could say whether we had to do with the revelation itself, or only with the mould of thought into which the disciple threw it?

That this difficulty has not been more felt by the Coleridge divines is due, we believe, to the preoccupation of their minds with intense convictions, thirsting for that which assimilates with them or gains a glory from them. Broad providential lights on history, genial hopes of a less selfish human world, they open to us by their wisdom and their life. And there are parts of Scripture, the Pauline Epistles eminently, and the Prophets in no slight degree, where a darkness readily breaks away at the approach of their characteristic thoughts. Mr. Maurice's *Unity of the New Testament* abounds with happy combinations possible only to a fine spiritual tact. But exegesis has work to do in which other gifts are of more avail than moral perception and religious insight: and then it is that these writers, like their favourite catechetical school of Alexandria, appear to us signally to fail. Who does not smile at Mr. Maurice's explanation of the first chapter of Genesis? And where, in addition, critical judgment and dexterity are required, the result is still worse,—as in his treatment of the genealogies of Jesus. No deficiency in the

furniture of scholarship causes this phenomenon. It is simply that biblical and historical criticism never succeeds, except in striking out partial lights, when it engages minds deeply tinctured with any metaphysical or spiritual enthusiasm. The eye, accustomed to the eternal realities, loses the quick and flitting glance that best seizes the expression of nature and the phenomena of time.

After all, the real force of this school is independent of scientific imperfections. They are *believing men*—afraid of no reality, despairing of no good, and resolute to test their faith by putting it straightway into life. They set to work to realise the kingdom of God in Soho Square and other nameable localities; and in their step towards this end there is as free, confiding, joyful movement, as if with their eyes they expected to see the great salvation. There is more of the future, we suspect, contained in their gospel than in any talking theology whose cry is heard in our streets.

Hence we feel ourselves to be falling *back* a step, when we turn from the preacher of Lincoln's Inn to the prophet of Chelsea. The influence of the latter, vastly the more intense and widespread, appears to us to have reached its natural limit, and taken up the portion of believers allotted to it. As a revolutionary or pentecostal power on the sentiments of Englishmen, it is perhaps nearly spent; and, like the romantic school of Germany, will descend from the high level of a faith to the tranquil honours of literature. So long as Mr. Carlyle spoke with any *hope* to the inward reverence of men, and in giving voice to their spiritual discontents made them feel that they were emerging from mean scepticisms into nobler inspirations, he was a deliverer to captives out of number. But the early voice of hope has become fainter and fainter, first passing into an infinite pathos, and then lost in humorous mocking or immeasurable scorn: and men cannot be permanently held by their antipathies and distrusts, and cease to look for any thing from a rebellion that never ends in peace. He gets us well enough out of Egypt and all its filthy idolatries; but, alas! his Red Sea will not divide, and the promised land is far as ever, and the question presses, whether "we are to die in the wilderness?" For a just estimate of Mr. Carlyle as an historian and man of letters the time is not yet come. But his specific action on the *religion* of the age (of which alone we speak) already belongs in a great measure to the past, and is little likely to offer new elements for appreciation.

It is difficult now to transfer ourselves back into the age, not yet faded however from living memory, when Boileau and Kames were great canonists in the world of letters, and criticism occupied the mortal form of Dr. Blair. Of what stuff the young souls of

that age could be made we cannot imagine, if they really found nutriment in solemn trifles about the unities and proprieties,—the choice of diction,—the length of sentences,—the nature of tropes,—and the rhetorical temperature required for interjection and apostrophes. Mr. Carlyle, among other contemporaries, certainly rose with indignant hunger from such a table of the gods, symmetrically spread with polished covers and nothing under them. In mere analysis of the machinery of expression or even thought, in rules for the manufacture of literary effects, he could find no response to the enthusiasm kindled in him by his favourite authors. The true ambrosia of the inner life was turned into dry ash by the legislators of *belles lettres* : and he was courageous enough to ask for the missing and immortal element. The same external direction had been taken by philosophy, and produced the same consciousness of a miserable void. The searching scepticism of Hume showed the dreary results to which the mere analysis of “experience” compendiously led. And the devices of utilitarian *cuisine* for putting pleasure into the pot and drawing virtue out betrayed the loss of the very idea of morals. The very things which this desiccating rationalism flung off, were to Mr. Carlyle just the essence and whole worth of the universe : and to show that beauty, truth, and goodness, could not thus be got rid of, while impostors were hired to bear their name ; that religion is not hope and fear, or duty prudence, or art a skill to please ; that behind the sensible there lies a spiritual, and beneath all relative phenomena an absolute reality,—was evidently, if not his early vow, at least his first inspiration. Surely it was an authentic appointment to a noble work : and on looking back over his quarter-century, no one can deny that it has been manfully achieved.

By what providence Mr. Carlyle learned the German language, in days when the study of it was rare, we cannot tell. But through it he evidently was enabled to “find his soul ;” and gained confidence to proclaim the faith which was stirring from its sleep within, and at once woke up at the sight of its reflected image without. That revolt against rationalism which Dr. Newman apparently *used*, and directed for preconceived ends and in the service of an “economy,” presents itself in Mr. Carlyle with all its veracious freshness. The same positions that approve themselves to the Oxford Catholic as suitable hypotheses, and to the Highgate philosopher as rational axioms, are seized by the living intuition of the Scottish seer ;—that wonder and reverence are the condition of insight and the source of strength ;—that faith is prior to knowledge, and deeper too ;—that empirical science can but play on the surface of unfathomable mysteries ;—that in the order of reality the ideal and invisible is the world’s

true adamant, and the laws of material appearance only its alluvial growths. In the inmost thought of men there is a thirst to which the springs of nature are a mere mirage, and which presses on to the waters of eternity. Extinguish this thirst by stupefaction of custom,—reduce thought to work *without* wonder,—and several delusions, both doleful and ridiculous, will speedily obtain high commissions in human affairs. The true marvel of Origination being lost, a “cause-and-effect philosophy” will esteem every thing solved when it has shown how each nine-pin in the universe knocks down the next. The spiritual germ and essence of humanity being forgot or denied, a “doctrine of circumstances” will discuss the prospect of furnishing to order any required supply of poets, philosophers, or able administrators,—like so many varieties of farm-stock. The idea of a God-given freedom being dismissed with the phantoms of “the dark ages,” a calculus of “motives” will be invented for finding the roots of every human problem, and raising any given sentient man to any required moral power. The genuine ground of all communion with the Infinite having sunk away within us, all sorts of logical proofs, and logical disproofs, will quarrel together about primitive certainties that shroud themselves from both. In all these complaints, the substantive concurrence of our author with Mr. Coleridge is conspicuous. And though, in his *Life of Sterling*, the humour has seized him to ridicule the “windy harangues” and dizzying metaphysics of the Highgate soirées, there was a time when he had no little faith in the same methods as well as large agreement in the same results. In his earlier essays, he too expounds the distinction between “Understanding” and “Reason,” and sets up the latter as the organ for apprehending the ideal essence, which is the true *real* of things. He speaks with reverential appreciation of Kant’s doctrine, both metaphysical and moral; and with hope as well as admiration of the several æsthetic theories developed from similar beginnings. In short, he manifestly put an early trust in the philosophical method to which Coleridge remained faithful to the last. And not less manifestly did he soon break away from this path in despair; and with characteristic vehemence thenceforth inveigh against the propensity to seek it as an illusion of disease. In 1827, he defended the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* against ignorant objectors, as reputed by competent judges to be “distinctly the greatest intellectual achievement of the century in which it came to light;” and dwelt with approval on the rule that, in quest of the highest truth, we must look *within*, and thence work outward with the torch we have lit. Yet in 1831 he broached, in his *Characteristics*, his celebrated doctrine of “Unconsciousness:” which teaches that all self-knowledge is

a curse, and introspection a disease; that the true health of a man is to have a soul without being aware of it,—to be disposed of by impulses which he never criticises,—to fling out the products of creative genius without looking at them. In a word, the *reflective* thought on which, in the former year, he had relied for the purest wisdom, had in the latter become the sin and despair of humanity. What can have befallen in the interval? Had the author meanwhile *tried* the metaphysic springs, and after due patience found them, not simply “saints’ wells,” with no healing in them, but poison-fountains, that made the sickly soul yet sicklier? We do not believe it: for there is nowhere any trace that the first clue of entrance into the German philosophy had been followed up; and on the other hand, every indication that Mr. Carlyle’s denunciation of metaphysics is the mere judgment of an intuitive genius on methods of reflection, which, however helpful to slower and more formal minds, it is not given him to take. Had he been able to retain and pursue his first hope,—had he taken the severe path of philosophical discipline, and surrendered himself to its promise of deliverance,—we hardly think that we should ever have heard that passionate cry of despair, which proclaims the distinctive glory of man to be his irremediable woe, and asserts that, in finding *himself*, he for ever falls from heaven. The preacher of this doctrine had already started problems within himself, to which no answer (as his own word declares) could be found but by faithful questioning within: and it is a serious thing to go thus far, and yet not abide long enough to hear the reply. But instead of this, he flings away the very problems with a shriek, as the fruit by which paradise is lost; repents of all knowledge of good and evil; claps a bandage round the open eyes of morals, religion, art; and sees no salvation but in spiritual suicide, by plunging into the currents of instinctive nature that sweep us we know not whither. This tragic paradox has, indeed, a generous source, and is even thrown up by a certain wild tumultuous piety. It springs from a deep sense of the hatefulness of self-worship, and the barrenness of mere self-formation. It is a stormy prayer for escape from these; only with face turned, alas! in the wrong direction—*back* towards the west, with its fading visions of Atlantic islands of Unconsciousness, instead of *forwards* to the east, where already the heavens are pale with a light, instead of a darkness, not our own.

Though this despair of the highest objective truth could not fail, in the long-run, to produce pathetic and tempestuous results, yet for a while the mere deliverance from the negations of the empirical schools sufficed for a gospel: and the new sense of divine mystery and meaning, behind all that met the common eye,

was little else in effect than a revelation. A certain consecration fell on what had been quite secular before: and with this peculiarity, that its influence spread as an underground beneath the foundations of objects and pursuits previously disconnected, and became a common conductor of fresh reverence into them all. Literature, art, politics, natural knowledge, seemed to sit less apart from religion. Heave off the utilitarian incubus from above, and secret affinities begin to be felt at the roots of their life. When it is no longer "the sole aim" of poetry "to please," of science to "get fruit" for the storehouses of comfort, of government "to protect body and goods," of sculpture and painting to minister to luxury,—they obtain ideal ends, which in essence melt and merge together; and all of them—beauty, truth, and righteousness—culminate in the reality of God. Whatever the theologians may say, the age owes a debt of rare gratitude to the man who, above all others, has awakened this new sense within its soul; has touched with a strange devoutness many a class which book and surplice had ceased to awe; has taken the impertinent self-will out of the movements of pencil, pen, and chisel; and made even Mechanics' Institutions ashamed of their incipient millennium of "useful knowledge." The influence of Mr. Carlyle's writings, and especially of his *Sartor Resartus*, has been primarily exerted on classes of men most exposed to temptations of egotism and petulance, and least subjected to any thing above them,—academics, artists, littérateurs, "strong-minded" women, "debating" youths, Scotchmen of the phrenological grade, and Irishmen of the Young-Ireland school. In the altered mood of mind which has been induced in these various groups within the last five-and-twenty years we acknowledge a conspicuous good; and could even hear, with more of sadness than of condemnation, the passionate words that once burst from the lips of a believer: "Carlyle is my religion!"

The *unity*, however, which our prophet's mystic sense discerns among our human "arts and sciences" is *too* great: and we must reclaim from him a distinction which not even the fusing power of his genius can do more than blur and conceal. Not in the *human* and *moral* world only, but *quite similarly in the physical*, does he see the expression of the Infinite and Divine. Both are alike symbols of the one spiritual essence, which is hid from the blind, and revealed to the wise, in all. He does not, like Coleridge, separate *nature* and *spirit* into two realms, quite differently related to Him who is the source of both,—the one His moulded fabric, the other His free image,—but treats them indiscriminately as the vehicles of His manifestation, and phenomena through which the Divine force pours. This is not, indeed, done by sinking humanity into a mere object of natural history; rather by raising the

objects of natural history up to the spiritual level, adding significance to them, instead of taking it from us. But still, man is not permitted to remain quite *sui generis* : he is simply the *highest* of the countless emblems woven into the universal "garment of God." The texture is one and homogeneous throughout :—in one sense all natural, as a determinate product in time ; in another, all supernatural, as mysteriously issuing from eternity. The same comprehensive formula,—the appearance of the Infinite in the finite,—serves every where, and equally describes "the lily of the field" and the Redeemer who interpreted its meaning.

Did we want to turn human life into a mere school of Art, there might be nothing very fatal in the looseness of this doctrine. An impartial conception of some Divine idea in every thing may clear away the film of sense, and open to view the life of much that else were dead. To rend away the veil is the grand condition for enabling the eye to see : whoever does this, may talk as he pleases of the realities behind ; they will vindicate themselves. Yet even for truth of *representation*, and infinitely more for faithfulness of character and action, a distinctive reverence for man as *more than natural*, as the abode of God in a sense quite false of clouds and stars, as intrusted with himself that he may surrender to a higher,—is indispensable. For want of this, Mr. Carlyle loses all ground of difference between the *natural* and the *right*,—the out-come of tendency and the free creations of conscience. He is tempted into excessive admiration of mere realising strength, irrespective of any higher test of spiritual worth. Whatever can get upon its feet, and persist in standing on this world, is vindicated in his eyes, and exhibited as a sample of the "eternal laws : " while that which has nothing to show for itself except that it *ought to be*,—righteousness that knocks in vain at the door of visible "fact,"—meets with no sympathy from him, and is even jeered for its foolish patience in still sitting on the step with unremitting prayer. True, he does not admit the rights of possession till after a pretty long term, and knows how to treat the "shams" and upstarts of to-day, the "flunkey" powers that usurp more venerable place, with withering scorn :—still, however, for a reason which would equally condemn an aspiration transcending human conditions, viz. because they are at variance with the laws of the actual, and are sure to be disowned by the baffling solidity of nature. Against the fickle multitude of momentary facts and popular semblances, he sides with the conservative aristocracy of natural laws ; but recognises no divine monarchy with prerogatives over both. The kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of nature being identical, neither transcending the other, but being related only as inner meaning and outward expression, no margin is left for an

ideal other than the long-run of the *actual*,—for an “*ought*” beyond the “*can*,”—for a will of God surpassing finite conditions. Hence Mr. Carlyle’s habit of resolving all ethical evil into “insincerity” and “unveracity,”—surely a most inadequate formula for the expression of even commonplace moral judgments. Extend these terms ever so much,—use them to denote *unconscious* as well as *conscious* self-variance,—nay, include in them also defiance of *nature and outward possibility*,—still, what far-fetched circuits must be taken before you can bring under such a definition the sins of envy, covetousness, resentment, and prudent licentiousness! The root of this delusive conception of human goodness lies in the pantheistic assumption, that to fly in the face of natural forces is to withstand the highest that there is; and its fruit, when fully ripe, cannot fail to be an indifference to many a natural sin,—a lowering of the ideal standard of conscience, and a derision of baffled yet trusting righteousness. Every reader of Mr. Carlyle can remember painful instances of entire abdication of all moral judgment on atrocious actions and abandoned men,—a Mirabeau and a September massacre: nay, even ridicule of the whole distinction of moral and immoral applied to actions, as “the blockhead’s distinction;” and many a hint that the difference lies only in the *customariness* (*mores*) of one practice as compared with another. Did it never occur to him to ask whether it is the human usages that make the moral sense, or not rather the moral sense that makes the human usages?

Yet this questionable doctrine, often provoked into expression by some senseless prudery or ungenial rigour, is very far from representing the author’s real and deepest mind. Flashes of purer light meet you not rarely, especially in his earlier writings. Who can forget how, in the hour of uttermost desolation, amid the wildest storm of unbelief, the sheet-anchor of the unhappy Teufelsdröckh was the “*infinite nature of Duty*,” and in this form never, in his utmost extremity, did the Divine presence desert him? And are we not told, in many changing tones, that in obedience and reverence alone can any true freedom be found? that we are to recognise God in the *higher* life within us, as opposed to the pleasure-life? that we can find Him only by self-renunciation? In these ingenious days, when no one proposition is so rude as to contradict any other, some disciple of the “many-sided” poet, or some proficient in the “dialectic process,” may be able to harmonise such sentiments with the assertion that “*man cannot but obey whatever he ought to obey*.” At present we do not pretend to have reached the “higher unity” in which appeals to our freedom coalesce with the assertion of universal necessity.

To pull up the fence between "nature" and "spirit" within us is to throw the Understanding and the Character into the same field. We are therefore prepared for the celebrated paradox, that intellect and goodness always go together; so that, of mental insight and moral soundness, either may be taken as the measure of the other. If by "intellect" and "insight" is meant exclusively what Coleridge calls "*reason*," this statement not only ceases to be a paradox, but becomes almost a truism: for it is the chief function of this power to make us conscious of moral truth and obligation; and the consciousness fades when faithlessly neglected. But if these terms refer to what Coleridge calls "*understanding*,"—if the possession of this endowment constitutes a claim upon them,—then the doctrine is conspicuously false: for the "adaptive intelligence," being an *animal* faculty, is entirely separable from moral conditions; actually exists without them in many tribes of creatures; and in man simply rises to a quickness of generalisation and a skill in the use of means which imply nothing respecting the wise estimate or the faithful pursuit of *ends*. Low passions and selfish impulses are quite capable of enlisting on their behalf all the resources of this mental gift; their partnership with which gives us the idea of a satanic nature. Mr. Carlyle, we believe, means to say, that *this* sort of "understanding" he will not acknowledge as intellect; it is a mere "beaver" or "fox" faculty, not to be noticed among the distinctions of man. Not till you have got beyond mechanical ingenuity and lawyer adroitness do you enter on the proper *human* territory; within which, capacity and character go together. This interpretation, throwing us upon Coleridge's upper region, reduces the maxim to an intelligible truth. But will Mr. Carlyle consent to take it with all its fair consequences? Will he, without flinching, read the truth *both* ways,—inferring *either* term of this constant ratio ("*intellectual*" and "*moral*") from the magnitude of the other? We know that, where he discovers (as in Mirabeau) great force of *mind*, he is ready to plead this in bar of all objections against *character*, and to insist that, in spite of appearances, such brightness of eye *must* carry with it soundness of conscience. But will he turn the problem round, and abide by it still? When he finds, deep hid in the retreats of private life, a goodness eminent and even saintly, a moral clearness and force great in their way as Mirabeau's keen-sightedness, will he accept the sign in evidence of mighty intellect? Will he say that, notwithstanding the meek and homely look, high genius must assuredly be there? We fear not: at least, we remember no instance in which the inference is set with its face this way; whilst it is familiar to all his readers as an excuse for admirations startling to the moral sense. In truth, this maxim,

more perhaps than any other indication, expresses the *pagan* character of our author's mind; his alienation from the distinctively Christian type of reverence, rather for the inner sanctities of self-renunciation than for the outward energies of self-assertion. His "hero-worships" certainly present us with a list far from concurrent with the "beatitudes;" nor can we fancy that he would listen with much more patience than a Lucian or a Pliny to blessings on the meek and merciful, the pure in heart, the ever-thirsty after righteousness. For him too, as for so many gifted and ungifted men, the force which will not be stopped by any restraint on its way to great achievement,—the genius which claims to be its own law, and will confess nothing diviner than itself,—have an irresistible fascination. His eye, overlooking the landscape of humanity, always runs up to the brilliant peaks of *power*: not, indeed, without a glance of love and pity into many a retreat of quiet goodness that lies safe beneath their shelter; but should the sudden lightning, or the seasonal melting of the world's ice-barriers, bring down a ruin on that green and feeble life, his voice, after one faint cry of pathos, joins in with the thunder and shouts with the triumph of the avalanche. Ever watching the strife of the great *forces* of the universe, he, no doubt, sides on the whole against the Titans with the gods: but if the Titans make a happy fling, and send home a mountain or two to the very beard of Zeus, he gets delighted with the game on any terms and cries, "Bravo!"

The *Sartor Resartus* finds the manifestation of God in the *entire life* of the universe; in visible nature; in individual man, and especially his *higher* mind; in the march and process of history; and in the organic development of humanity as a whole. The author's tendency, however, has increasingly been to retreat from all other media of Divine expression upon his favourite centre,—the genius and energy of *heroic men*. So much has he gathered-in his lights of interpretation upon this focus, as to incur the charge of setting up the personality of individuals as the single determining agency in the affairs of the world, and forgetting the larger half of the truth, that all persons, taken one by one, are but elements of a great social organism, to whose laws of providential growth they must be held subordinate. History cannot be resolved into a mere series of biographies: nor can the individual be justly estimated in his insulation, and tried by the mere inner law of his own particular nature. It would be a melancholy outlook for the world, if its courses were simply contingent on the genius and life of a few great men, without any security from a general law behind that they should appear at the right time and place, and with the aptitudes for the needful work. And, on the other hand, were the life of

nations to be expended in nothing else than the production of its half-dozen heroes ; were this splendid but scanty blossoming the great and only real thing it does, there would seem to be a wasteful disproportion between the mighty forest that falls for lumber and the sparse fruit that would lie upon your open hand. There is need, therefore, of some more manifest relation between individual greatness and the collective life of humanity ; and to save us from egoism, from fatalism, from arbitrary and capricious morals, we must learn to recognise a divine method of development in both,—*primarily*, in race and nation, and with authority over the *secondary* functions of personal genius.

That Mr. Carlyle's "hero-worship" requires to be balanced by a supplementary doctrine of society and collective humanity, he would himself perhaps be disposed to allow. But what is this supplement to be ? Is it merely to teach that the *individual* is to hold himself at the disposal of *the whole* ? to correct his conscience by the general tradition or the permanent voice of humanity ; to sink his egoism, to temper it by immersion in the universal element, and become the organ of the progress of the species ? Far be it from us to deny that there may be men susceptible of inspiration from such a faith,—capable of dying for such abstractions as a "law of development," of being torn limb from limb out of regard for "the whole." Still less would we disparage by one word a heroism all the nobler for the faint whispers that suffice to waken it into life. Yet we cannot help feeling that in these impersonal ideas,—of "collective society," "law of the whole," "destination of mankind," &c.—there is a want of natural authority over the conscience, and, missing the conscience, over the personal impulses of individual men. In the mere notions of "whole and part," of "organism and member," of "average rule and particular case," there resides no *moral* element, no *rights over the will* : and if ever they seem to carry such functions, it is only because a deeper feeling lurks behind and lends them the insignia of a prerogative not their own. In a world of mere "general laws," it would ever remain a melancholy thing to see living heroes and saints struck down at the altar of "historical tendency" by some shadowy dagger of necessity. Love, enthusiasm, devotion, need some concrete and living object ; if not to command their allegiance, at least to turn it from sorrow into joy. And you have but to translate your "progress of the species" into "Kingdom of Heaven," and the problem is solved. The ever-living God stands in Person between the "individual" and the "whole,"—by His communion mediating between them,—stirring in the conscience of the one, and constituting the tides of advancing good in the other,—and so engaging both in one spiritual life. Surrendering imme-

diately to Him, instead of to the ultimate ratios of the world, faithful men fling themselves into Omnipotent sympathy, and find deliverance and repose. They have a trust that relieves them of every care; and can leave themselves to be applied to the great account and problem of the world by One who is in the midst, and from the first, and at the end, at once. Through Him, therefore, as the common term of all righteousness, must the collective humanity win its due rights and reverence from Each. The private conscience ceases to be private, the public claim to be merely public, when both are to us the instant pleadings of His living authority. In obeying them, we yield neither to a mixed multitude of our own kind, whose average voice is no better than our own, nor even to our mere higher self; but to the august Revealer of whatever is pure and just and true. In enforcing its traditions and inheritance of right, the Nation or Society of men is not proudly riding on its own arbitrary will, but recognising the trust committed to it and serving as the organism of eternal rectitude.

It is for want of this deliverance from Self at the upper end, that Mr. Carlyle, resolute to break the ignoble bondage on any terms, proposes escape at the lower end; and, preaching up the glories of "Unconsciousness," sighs for relapse into the life of blind impulsive tendency. With him, we confess the curse; we groan beneath its misery; but we see from it a double path,—backward into Nature, forward into God,—and cannot for an instant doubt that the Self-consciousness which is the beginning of Reason is never to recede, but to rise and free itself in the transfiguration of Faith. Deny and bar out this hope, and who can wonder if the sharpest remedies for man's selfish security are welcomed with a wild joy; if *any* convulsion that shall strip off the green crust of artificial culture and lay bare the primitive rock beneath us, appears as a needful return of the fermenting chaos? How else are the elementary forces of instinctive nature to reassert their rights and *begin again* from their unthinking freshness? In some such feeling as this we find, perhaps, the source, in Mr. Carlyle, of that terrible glee that seems to flame up at the spectacle of revolutionary storms, and to-dart with mocking gleams of devilry and tender streaks of humanity over a background of "divine despair." Indeed we could not wish for a better illustration of the two paths of escape from Self,—back into Nature, forward into God,—than the contrast of Carlyle and Maurice in the whole colouring and climate of their spirit: the sad, pathetic, scornful humour of the one, capricious with laughter, tears, and anger, and expressive of manful pity and endurance, alike removed from fear and hope; and the buoyant, serene, trustful temper of the other, genial even in its indignation, and penetrated with the joy of an Infinite Love.

The three schools of doctrine at which we have thus rapidly glanced occupy the most distant points in the English religion of the present age ; or, at least, in the new fields of tendency which it has opened. It may seem a vain quest to look for any thing common to the whole. Yet when they are interpreted by their inner spirit, rather than by their outward relations, one thought will be found secreted at the heart of all—the perennial Indwelling of God in Man and in the Universe. This is the distinct gain that has been won by the spiritual consciousness of the time ; and that already enriches fiction and poetry, art and social morals, not less than direct theology. In the preceding criticisms we have said enough to show that we are not indifferent to the mode and form of doctrine in which this thought is embodied. But however threatening the mists from which it has to clear itself, it is the dawn of a truth,—a blush upon the East,—wakening up trustful hearts to thanksgiving and hope. We know well the anger and antipathy of all the elder parties towards every phase of the new sentiment. We are accustomed to their absurd and heartless attempt to divide all men between the two poles of their logical dilemma,—either absolute Atheism, or else “our” orthodoxy. But these are only symptoms that the new wine cannot go into the old bottles. They do but betray the inevitable blindness of party-life,—the increasing self-seeking, the loss of genial humility, the conceit of finished wisdom, which mark the decadence of all sects. Precisely in the middle of this pretended alternative of necessity,—far from “Atheism” on the one hand, and from most “orthodoxies” on the other,—stand at this moment the vast majority of the most earnest, devout, philosophic Christians of our time ; men with trust in a Living Righteousness, which no creed of one age can adequately define for the fresh experiences given to the spirit of another. To them, and not to the noisy devotees and pharisees of party, do we look for the faith of the future.

A LIST OF RECENT WORKS SUITABLE FOR BOOK-SOCIETIES.

An Introduction to the Study of the Old Testament. By Alfred Barry, M.A. John W. Parker and Son.

A Rationale of Justification by Faith. Hamilton and Adams.

[A thoughtful and able theological essay. It is written mainly from the point of view taken by the Coleridge theologians. So far as it falls short of this, in the effort to be more orthodox, it seems to us to lose its own footing.]

On Truth and Error. Thoughts, in prose and verse. By John Hamilton (of St. Ernan's), M.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge. Macmillan and Co.

The State of France before the Revolution, 1789. By M. de Tocqueville. John Murray.

[The most mature work on political philosophy published in recent times.]

Memoirs of the Marquis of Montrose. By Mark Napier. 2 vols. Hamilton and Adams.

[This enlargement of the same author's "Life and Times of Montrose" contains much new and valuable historical material. The author's politics are exceedingly prejudiced, and his style rather tumid.]

Memoirs of Frederick Perthes. From the German of Clement Theodore Perthes, Professor of Law in the University of Bonn. 2 vols. Hamilton and Adams.

[A piece of extremely minute German biography, referring to a period of great social and political interest. The simplicity, strength, and heartiness of Perthes' character make him an admirable type of the non-speculative but cultivated portion of the German middle classes.]

Beaumarchais and his Times. Vols. 3 and 4. Addey and Co.

The Espousals. By the Author of "The Angel in the House." J. W. Parker.

[A second instalment of a genuine poem, worthy of, if not quite equal to, the first portion.]

Bothwell. A Poem. By W. Edmondstoune Aytoun, D.C.L. Blackwood.

[A poem of rather level history, not without tasteful passages. It may be read once, but hardly a second time.]

England in Time of War. By Sydney Dobell. Smith, Elder, and Co.

[Noticed in Article VII.]

Essays, Critical and Imaginative. By Professor Wilson. Vol. 1. Blackwood.

[Containing many charming papers, scarcely inferior to those in "The Recreations of Christopher North."]

The Sketcher. By the Rev. John Eagles, M.A., Oxon. Originally published in "Blackwood's Magazine." Blackwood.

[Artistic chat, scarcely worthy of separate publication.]

English Traits. By R. W. Emerson. Routledge and Co.

[Often epigrammatic, sometimes fanciful, but every where readable.]

The Cauvery, Kistnah, and Godavery. Being a Report on the Works constructed on these rivers for the irrigation of the provinces of Tanjore, Guntoor, Masulipatam, and Rajahmundry, in the Presidency of Madras. By R. Baird Smith, F.G.S. Smith, Elder, and Co.

[We have heard of a book-society that ordered "Johnson's Dictionary" and "Burns' Justice." To one much less solidly disposed these valuable maps and the report will be a welcome study. No one who has read Colonel Cotton's little book on the irrigation of India can find a subject uninteresting which closely concerns the lives of so many millions of our subjects.]

Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, 1852-4. By M. C. Perry. Vol. 1. Trübner.

Letters from Paraguay and Brazil. By the late Charles Mansfield, M.A., Clare Hall, Cambridge. With a Sketch of the Author's Life, by Charles Kingsley, Rector of Eversley. Macmillan and Co.

[Rambling notes of a rambling journey in South America, agreeable to read.]

The Oxonian in Norway; or Notes of Excursions in that Country. By the Rev. Frederick Metcalfe, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. 2 vols. Hurst and Blackett.

Sight-seeing in Germany and the Tyrol, in the autumn of 1855. By Sir John Forbes. Smith, Elder, and Co.

[This book tells us the things to see, but little more. It is a guide-book. The Tyrol portion will not compare at all in merit with Mr. White's charming account of his pedestrian tour there, also recently published.]

Our Captivity in Russia. With an Account of the Blockade of Kars. By Colonel Atwell Lake, C.B. Bentley.

Young Singleton. By Talbot Gwynne. 2 vols. Smith, Elder, and Co.

[Not without cleverness, but disagreeable.]

Eveleen. By E. L. A. Berwick, Author of "The Dwarf." 3 vols. Smith, Elder, and Co.

[Very readable and clever.]

America by Rail and River. By W. Ferguson. Nisbet.

Southey's Correspondence. Vols. 3 and 4. Longmans.

The Stereoscope ; its History, Theory, Construction. By Sir David Brewster. Murray.

Ferny Combes : a Ramble after Ferns in the Glens and Valleys of Devonshire. By Charlotte Chanter, Lovell Reeve.

Dred : a Tale. By Mrs. Stowe, author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Sampson Low, Son, and Co.

[Some of Mrs. Stowe's sketches in this book are full of genius ; but there is no action.]

It is never too late to mend. By Charles Reade. 3 vols. Bentley.

[Discontinuous as a tale, but full of life, observation, and ability.]

The Hills of the Shatemuc. By Miss Warner. Sampson Low, Son, and Co.

[Very still life indeed ; the dialogue evidently has often obscure meanings to the authoress's mind, which do not reach the reader, so that the loquacity is inarticulate. There is eye for character, but very inadequate voice.]

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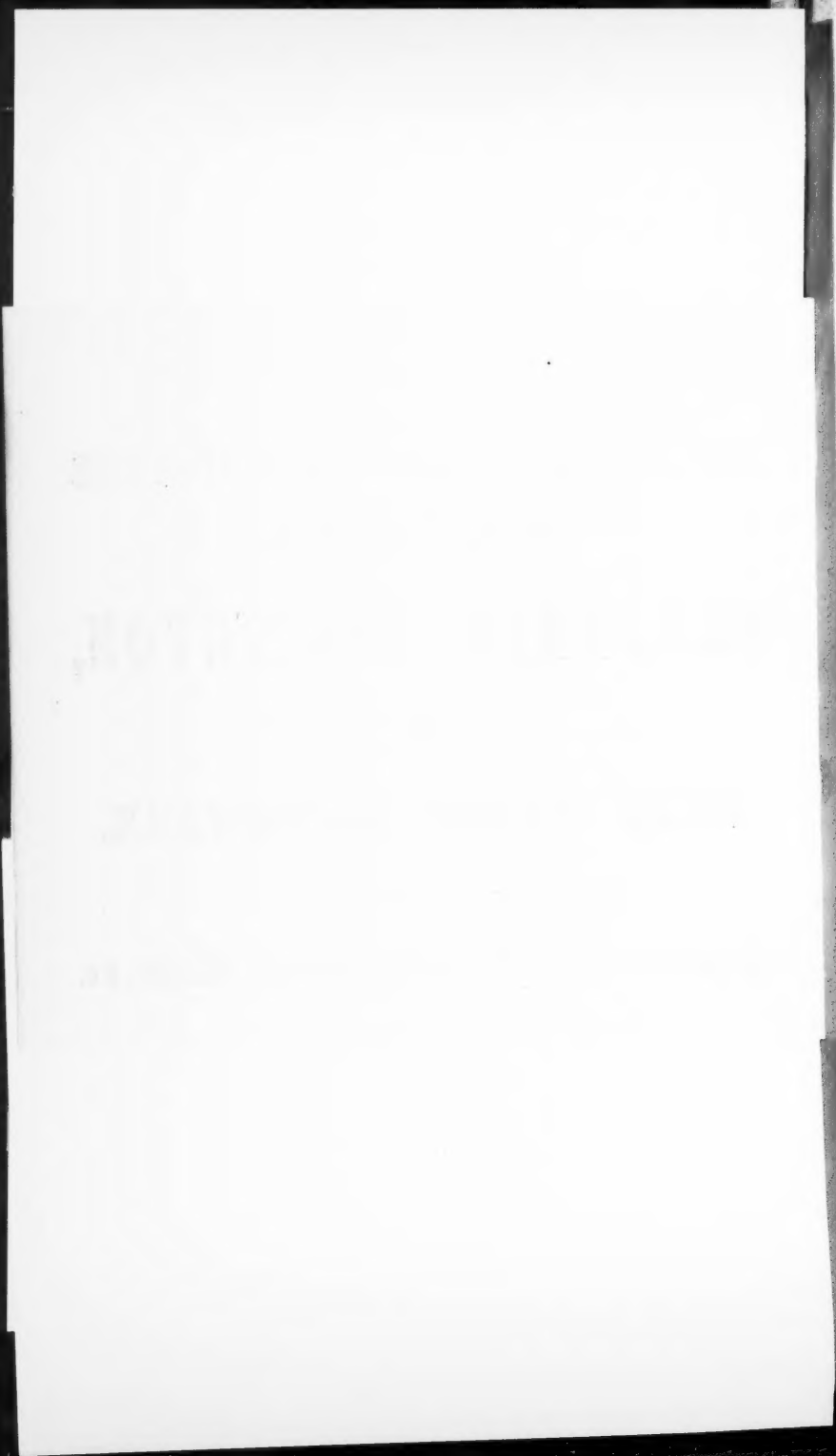
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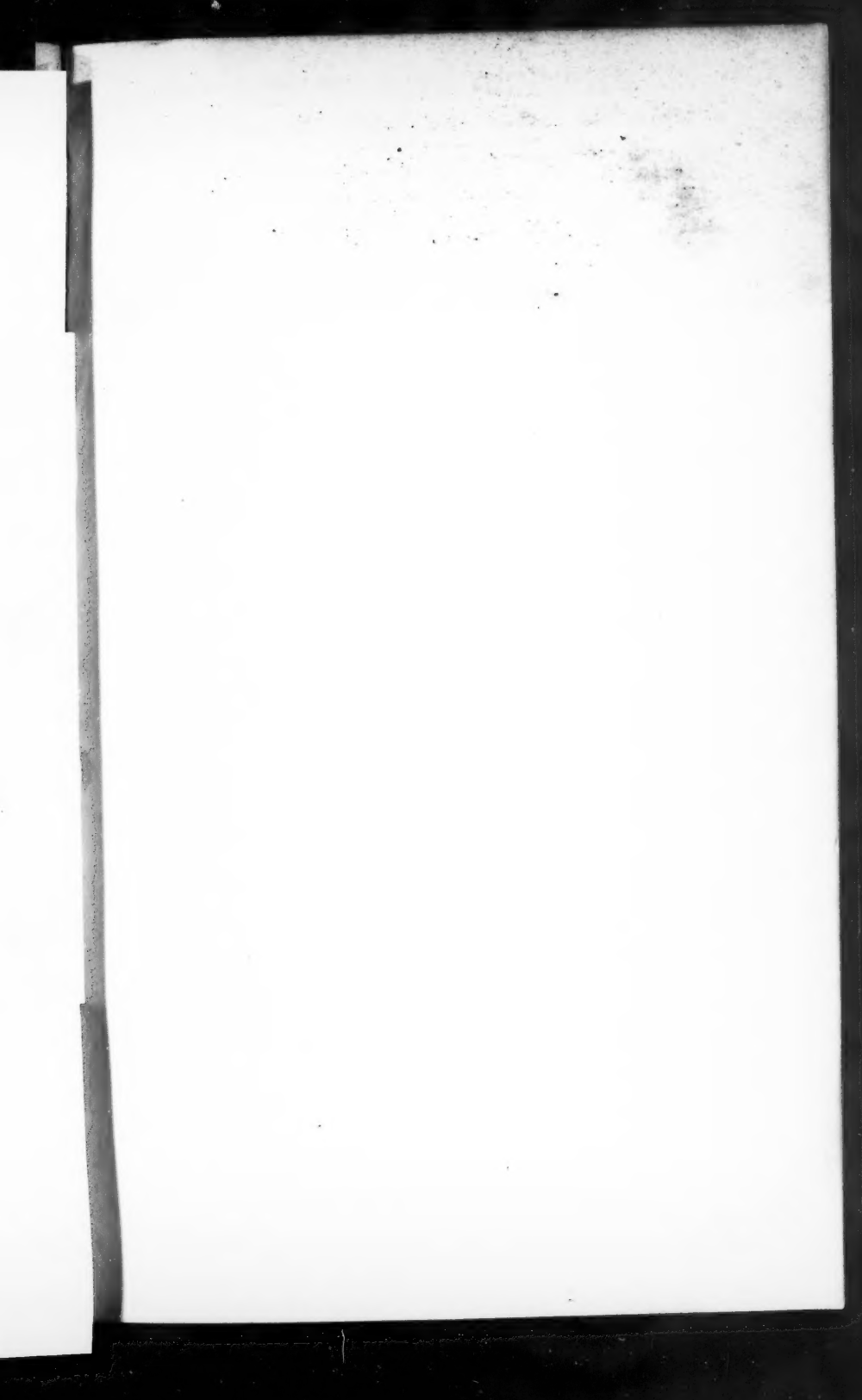
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- III. Victor Cousin on Madame de Hautefort and her Contemporaries.
- IV. Percy Bysshe Shelley.
- V. De Foe as a Novelist.
- VI. Italy.
- VII. Sydney Dobell's Poems on the War.
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No. VII. will appear on the 1st January 1857.

